THE

Plain Mans Path-way TO HEAVEN:

WHEREIN

Every man may clearly ſee whether he ſhall be ſaved or damned.

Set forth Dialogue-wiſe: for the better underſtanding of the ſimple.

BY

Arthur Dent, Preacher of the Word of God at *South-Shoobery* in *Eſſex*.

Corrected and much amended; with a Table of all the principal matters; and three Prayers, neceſſary to be uſed in private families, hereunto added by the ſame Author.

Zephaniah 3. 5.

Every morning the Lord bringeth his judgment to light, he faileth not: but the wicked will not learn to be aſhamed.

LONDON:

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BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Right Worſhipful, Sir *Julius Cæſar*, Knight, one of the Maſters of the Requeſt to the Kings Majeſty, Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, and Maſter of St. *Katherins*: *A. D.* wiſheth all good things in Chriſt Jeſus.

HAving finiſhed (Right Worſhipful) and made ready for the Preſſe this Dialogue, I bethought mee (ſith the common manner of al that write any Book in this age, is to dedicate the ſame to one or other of great place) to whom I might dedicate theſe my poor Labors. At laſt, I did reſolve with my ſelf, none to bee more fit then your Worſhip, both in regard of ſome affinity in the fleſh, as alſo becauſe of thoſe manifold good parts, wherewith the Almighty hath endued you. Having therfore none other thing to preſent your Worſhip withal (in token of a thankful heart for your courteſies ſhewed towards mee) behold, I do here ſend unto you this third fruit of my labours publiſhed: moſt humbly beſeeching you to take it in good worth: not weighing the value of the thing, (which is of no value) but the ſimple and good mind and meaning of the giver.

This work doth ſharply reprove and evict the world of ſin, and therefore is like to find many deadly enemies, which with cruel hatred will moſt eagerly purſue it unto death. Zoilus *alſo and his fellows, I know, will bitterly carp at*

it: therefore it flyeth unto your worship, for protection, and humbly desireth to take sanctuary under your wings. Wherefore I humbly intreat you to take upon you the Patronage and Defence of it, that by your means it may be delivered both from the calumnious Obloquies of evil disposed persons, and also from the worlds malignity, so as it may take no injury. And concerning this little volume, the sum of the matter of it, you shall find in the Epistle to the Reader. *As concerning the manner, here is no great matter of Learning, wit, Art, Eloquence, or ingenious Inventions, (for I have herein specially respected the ignorant and vulgar sort, whose edification I do chiefly aim at;) yet somewhat there is which may concern the learned, & give them some contentment. Whatsoever it be, I leave it with your Worship, beseeching you to give it entertainment. And so I do most humbly take my leave, commending both your self, your good wife, and your whole family, to the merciful protection of the ever living God.*

From *South-Shoobery* in *Essex.*
April. 10. *An. Dom.* 1601.

Your Worships to command
in the Lord,

ARTHUR DENT.

The

The Epiſtle to the Reader.

GEentle Reader, ſeeing my little Sermon of Repentance, ſome few yearsſince publiſhed, hath been ſo well accepted of, I have for thy further good, publiſhed this Dialogue, being the third fruit of my labour; wiſhing it the like ſucceſs, that God thereby may have the glory, and thou who art the Reader, comfort. I have in one part of this Dialogue, produced ſome of the antient Writers, and ſome of the wiſe Heathen alſo, to teſtifie upon their Oath in their own language, and to bear witneſs of the uglineſſe of ſome Vices, which wee in this age might make light of: which I wiſh may not bee offenſive to any. In other parts of this work I do in a manner relinquiſh them. But in this caſe I have in my weak judgement thought them to bee of ſome good uſe, to ſhew forth thus much, That if wee do not in time repent, forſake our ſinnes, and ſeek after GOD, both

both the Antient Chriſtian Fathers (whoſe eyes ſaw not that we ſee, nor their ears heard what we hear) yea, the very Heathen alſo ſhall riſe up in judgement againſt us. Let none therfore ſtumble at it. But if any man do, let him remember, I am in a Dialogue, not in a Sermon. I write to all of all ſorts; I ſpeak not of ſome few of one ſort. But that which is done herein, is not much more then that of the Apoſtle, (*as ſome of your own Poets have ſaid*) which is warrantable. One thing dear Chriſtian, I pray thee, let mee beg of thee; to wit, that thou wouldſt not read two or three leaves of this Book, and ſo caſt it from thee; but that thou wouldſt read it throughout, even to the end. For I do aſſure thee, if there be any thing in it worth the reading, it is beſtowed in the latter part thereof, and moſt of all towards the concluſion. Be not diſcouraged therefore at the harſhneſs of the beginning; but look for ſmoother matter in the midſt, and moſt ſmooth in the perclose and wind up of all. For this Dialogue hath in it, not the nature of

Act. 5. 17.

of a Tragedy, which is begun with joy, and ended with ſorrow; but a Comedy, which is begun with ſorrow, and ended with joy. This Book meddleth not at all with any controverſies in the Church, or any thing in the ſtate Eccleſiaſtical, but onely entreth into a Controverſie with Satan and Sin. The Authour of all bleſſing give a bleſſing unto it. The God of peace, which brought again from the dead our *L*ord Jeſus, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the everlaſting Covenant, make us perfect in all good works, ſanctifie us throughout, amend all our imperfections, and keep us blameleſs untill the day of his moſt glorious appearing. Amen.

Thine in the Lord,

A. D.

THE CONTENTS OF THIS DIALOGUE.

First, it sheweth mans misery by nature, with the means of recovery.

Secondly, it sharply inveigheth against the iniquity of the time, and common corruptions of the world.

Thirdly, it sheweth the marks of the children of God, and of the reprobates; with the apparent signs of salvation and damnation.

Fourthly, it declareth how hard a thing it is to enter into life, and how few shall enter.

Fifthly, it layeth open the ignorance of the world, with the objections of the same.

Last of all, it publisheth and proclaimeth the sweet promises of the Gospel, with the abundant mercies of God to all that repent, believe, and turn truely unto him.

The

The Plain Man's Path-way to HEAVEN.

Interlocutors. *Theologus*, a Divine. *Philagathus*, an honest man. *Asunetus*, an ignorant Man, *Antilegon* a Caviller.

Phil. WEll met, good Mr. *Theologus*. Theol. What, mine old friend Philagathus! I am glad to see you in good health.

Phil. Are you walking, Sir, here all alone in this pleasant meadow?

Theol. Yea, for that I take some pleasure at this time of the year, to walk abroad in the fields for my recreation, both to take the fresh air, and to hear the sweet singing of birds.

Phil. Indeed, Sir, it is very comfortable, especially now in this pleasant moneth of *May*, and thanks be to God, hitherto wee have had a very forward Spring, and as kindly a season as came this seaven year.

Theol. God doth abound towards us in mercies: O that we could abound towards him in thankfulness!

Phil. I pray you, Sir, what a clock hold you it?

Theol. I take it to be a little past One, for I come but even now from dinner.

Phil. But behold, yonder come two men towards us; what be they, I pray you?

Theol. **They be a couple of neighbours of the next Parish: the one of them is called** Asunetus, **who in very deed is a very ignorant man in Gods matters, and the other is called** Antilegon, **a notable Atheist, and caviller against all godnesse.**

Phil. If they be such, it were good for us to take some occasion to speak of matters of Religion: it may be we shall do them some good.

Theol. **You have made a good motion; I like it well. If therefore you will minister some matter, and move some questions, I will be ready to answer in the best sort I can.**

Phil. But stay, Sir, lo here they come upon us.

Theol. **Welcome, good neighbours, welcome. How do you,** Asunetus, **and you** Antilegon?

Asun. Well God be thanked: and we are glad to see your Mastership in good health.

Theol. **What make both of you here at this time of the day? There is some occasion, I am sure, driveth you this way.**

Asun. Indeed sir, we have some little business; for we came to talke with one of your Parish about a Cow we should buy of him.

Theol. **Hath my neighbour a Cow to sell?**

Antil. We are told he hath a very good one to sell; but I am afraid at this time of the year we shall find dear ware of her.

Theol. **How dear? what do you think a very good Cow may be worth?**

Antil. A good Cow indeed at this time of the year is worth very near four pound, which is a great price.

Theol.

Theol. It is a very great price indeed.

Phil. I pray you, M. *Theologus*, leave off this talking of Kine, and worldly matters, and let us enter into some speech of matters of Religion, whereby we may do good, and take good one of another.

Theol. You say well. But it may be these mens business requires haste, so as they cannot stay.

Asun. No, Sir, we are in no great haste; we can stay two or three hours, for the daies are long: if we dispatch our business by night, it will serve our turn well enough.

Theol. Then if it will please you to walk to yonder Oak-tree, there is a goodly Arbour, and handsome seats, where we may all sit in the shadow, and confer of heavenly matters.

Asun. With a good will, sir.

Phil. Come then, let us go.

Asun. This is a goodly Arbour indeed, and here be handsome seats.

Theol. Sit you all down, I pray you. Now, friend Philagathus **if you have any questions to move of matters of Religion, we are all ready to hear you.**

Phil. It may be these men are somewhat ignorant of the very principles of Religion; and therefore I think it not amisse to begin there, & so to make way for further matters.

Theol. I pray you do so then.

Phil. First then, I demand of you in what state all men are born by nature.

Theol. In the state of condemnation: as appears, Eph. 2. 3. We are by nature the children of wrath as well as others. **And again**

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it is written, Behold, I was born in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceived me, *Psal.* 51. 5.

Phil. Is it every mans case? Are not Dukes and Nobles, Lords and Ladies, and the great Potentates of the earth, exempted from it?

Theol. **No surely: it is the common case of all, both high and low, rich and poor; as it is written,** What is man, that he should be clean, and he that is born of a woman, that he should be just?

Phil. From whence commeth it, that all men are born in so woful case?

Theol. **From the fall of Adam, who thereby hath not onely wrapt himself, but all his posterity in extream, and unspeakable misery, as the Apostle saith,** By one mans disobedience, many were made sinners. **And,** By the offence of one, the fault came upon all men to condemnation, *Rom.* 5. 1.

Phil. What reason is there that wee all should thus bee punished for another mans offence?

Theol. **Because we were then all in him, and are now all of him: that is, we are so descended out of his loyns, that of him we have not onely received our natural and corrupt bodies, but also by propagation have inherited his foul corruptions, as it were by hereditary right.**

Phil. But for as much as some have dreamed that *Adam* by his fall hurt himself onely, and not his posterity; and that we have his corruption derived unto us by imitation, and not by propagation: therefore I pray you shew this more plainly.

Theol.

Theol. **Even as great Personages by committing of treason, do not onely hurt themselves, but also staine their blood, and disgrace their posterity (for the children of such Nobles are disinherited, whose blood is attainted, till they be restored again by act of Parliament:) even so our blood being attainted by** Adams **transgression, we can inherit nothing of right, till we be restored by Christ.**

Phil. Doth this hereditary infection and contagion over-spread our whole nature?

Theol. **Yes truely, it is universal, extending it self throughout the whole man, both soul and body, both reason, understanding, will, and affections: for the Scriptures avouch, that** we are dead in sins and trespasses. Eph. 2. 1. Col. 1. 2. & 3. 2.

Phil. How understand you that?

Theol. **Not of the deadness of the body, or the naturall faculties of the soul, but of the spirituall faculties.**

Phil. Did *Adam* then lose his nature, and destroy it by his fall? or is our nature taken away by his fall?

Theol. **Not so: our Nature was corrupted thereby, but not destroyed; for still there remaineth in our Nature, Reason, Understanding, Will, and Affections, and wee are not as a block or a stock, but by** Adams **disobedience wee are blemished, maimed, and spoiled of all ability to understand aright, or to will and do aright; as it is written,** 2. Cor. 3. 5. We are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves; but

Phil. 2. 13. Jam. 3. 9.

but our sufficiency is of God. **And again**, It is God which worketh in you, both the will and the deed, even of his good pleasure. **And as concerning the other point**, S. James saith, That all men are made after the similitude of God: **meaning thereby, that there remain some reliques and parts of Gods Image even in the most wicked men; as reason, understanding**, &c. **so that our nature was not wholly destroyed.**

Phil. Then you think there be some sparks and remnants left in us still of that excellent image of God which was in our first creation.

Theol. **I think so indeed; and it may plainly appear unto us in the wise speeches and writings of Heathen Poets and Philosophers: in all which we may, as by certain ruines, perceive what was the excellent frame and building of mans creation.**

Phil. Can a man please God in any thing which he doth, so long as hee continueth in the state of nature.

Theol. **No, not in any thing: for till we be in the state of grace, even our best actions are sinful, as preaching, prayer, almsdeeds**, &c. **as it is written:** Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean? Job 14.4. **The Apostle also saith**, They that are in the flesh, cannot please God, *Rom.* 8.8. **that is, such as are still in their natural corruption. And our Lord Jesus himself saith**, Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? *Mat.* 7. 16. **meaning thereby that meer natural men can bring forth no fruits acceptable to God.**

Phil.

Phil. This is a very harsh and hard saying. I pray you for my further instruction make it more plain.

Theol. **When in the state of nature may do those things which of themselves are good; but they do utterly fail in the manner of doing them; they do them not as they should be done: that is, in faith, love, zeal, conscience of obedience, &c. Neither yet with any chearfulness, delight or feeling; but even as it were forcing themselves to do the outward actions. Thus did Cain sacrifice, the Pharisees pray, Annanias and Saphira give alms, and the Jews offer up their oblations and burnt offerings.**

Phil. Have men any true sight, or lively and sound feeling of this misery, and woeful estate, so long as they be meerly natural?

Theol. **No surely, but are altogether blinded and hardned in it, being nothing desirous to come out of it, but do greatly please themselves in it, and can hardly be perswaded that they are in any such woeful case: as appeareth plainly in the example of that Ruler, who being commanded, or rather required of our Saviour Christ to keep the Commandments, answered,** All these have I kept from my youth, *Luke* 8. 21. **And again, although the Church of** Laodicea, **was wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, yet she thought her self rich, encreased with goods, and wanting nothing. It followeth then, that so long as men are in the state of nature, they have no true sight and feeling of their miseries.**

Phil.

Phi. Do you think, that all men, being meerly naturall, are under the curse of the law?

Theol. Yes certainly: and not onely so, but also under the very tyranny and dominion of Satan, though they know it not, feel it not, or perceive it not: for all that are not in Christ, are under the curse of the Law, and the power of Darknesse, and the Devil: as appeareth, Ephes. 2. 2. where the Devil is called the Prince that ruleth in the Ayr, even the spirit that now worketh in the Children of disobedience. In another place he is called the God of this world, who blindeth the eyes of all unbelievers. And again it is said, That all men naturally are in his snare, being taken captive of him at his will.

Cor. 4. 4.

Phil. Few will be perswaded of that; they will say, they defie the Devil, and thank God they were never troubled with him.

Theol. Their hot words do nothing amend the matter; for the Devil is no more driven away with words, then with holy water, but he sitteth in the tongues and mouths, nay, possesseth the very hearts and entrails of thousands, which say, They defie him, and are not troubled with him; as appeareth manifestly by their particular actions, and the whole course of their life.

Phil. Methinks if the Devil do so inwardly possess the hearts and consciences of men, they should have some sight & feeling of it.

Theol. The working of the Devil in mens souls (being an invisible Spirit)

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is with such unconceivable sleight and crafty conveyance, that men in the state of nature, cannot possibly feel it or perceive it: for how can a blind man see, or a dead man feel?

Phil. Shew this more plainly.

Theol. Even as a crafty Juggler doth so prestigate and blind mens outward senses by the delusions of Satan, that they think they see that which they see not, and feel that which they feel not: even so the Devil doth so delude and bewitch our inward senses, and the natural faculties of our souls, that we having a mist cast before our eyes, think we are that which we are not, see that which we see not, and feel that which we feel not. For the deep cunning of Satan lieth in this, that he can give us our deaths wound, and we shal never know who hurt us.

Phil. Few will believe this to be true.

Theol. True indeed: for few will believe the Scriptures; few will believe this, because few feel it: where it is not felt, it can hardly bee believed. Onely the Elect do feel it, and therefore onely the Elect do believe it. As for all others, they are the very Prentices and Bond-slaves of the Devil, which is a thousand times worse then to be a galley-slave.

Phil. How long do men continue in this woful state of nature, being under the curse of the Law, and the very slavery of Satan & sin?

Theol. Till they be regenerate and born again, & so brought into the state of grace; as

Joh. 3. 3 as our Lord Jesus saith, Except a man be born again, hee cannot see the Kingdome of God.

Phil. Do not many dye, and depart this life before they be born again, and consequently, before they be brought into the state of grace?

Theol. Yes no doubt, thousands: for many live fourty or threescore years in this world, and in the end dye, and go out of this life, before they know wherefore they came into it; as it is written, My people perish for want of knowledge. Hos. 4. 6.

Phil. What may wee think of such?

Theol. I quake to speak what I think: for surely I do not see how such can be saved. I speak not now of infants and children, whereof some, no doubt, are saved by vertue of the promise and covenant, through the election of grace.

Phil. It seemeth then that you think none can be saved, but those onely which are born again.

Theol. I think so indeed.

Phil. I pray you tell mee what the same regeneration and new birth is, whereof you speak.

Theol. It is a renewing and repairing of the corrupted and decayed estate of our souls: as it is written, Be ye changed by the renewing of your mind, Rom. 12. And again, Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, Eph. 4. 2, 3.

Phil. Explain this more fully.

Theol. Even as the wild Olive retaineth his old nature, till it be grafted into the

the swéet Olive, but afterward is partaker of a new nature; so we, till we be grafted into Christ, retain our old nature, but afterward are turned into a new creature: as it is written, if any man bee in Christ, he is a new creature, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17.

Phil. I understand not what you say.

Theol. You must know this, that as there is a natural birth of the whole man; so there is also a spiritual birth of the whole man.

Phil. How is that?

Theol. When as the natural faculties of the soul, as reason, understanding, will and affections, and the members of the body also are so sanctified, purged and rectified by grace, that we understand, will, and desire that which is good.

Phil. Cannot a man will and desire that which is good before he be born again?

Theol. No more then a dead man can desire the good things of this life. For mans will is not free to consent unto good, till it be enlarged by grace, and an unregenerated man doth sin necessarily, though not by constraint. For mans will is free from constraint, (for it sinneth of it self) but not from thraldome unto sinne.

Phil. You speak as if a man could do no other thing but sin till the new work bee wrought in him.

Theol. That is mine opinion indeed. For a man and his flesh are all one, till hee be regenerate; they agree together like man and wife, they joyn together in all evil, they live and dye together: for when

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the flesh perisheth, the man perisheth.

Phil. Is not this regeneration a changing, or rather destroying of humane nature?

Theol. **Nothing lesse: it is neither an abolishing, nor changing of the substance of body or soul, or any of the faculties thereof, but onely a rectifying and repairing of them, by removing the corruption.**

Phil. Is then our natural corruption so purged and quite removed by the power of grace, as that it remaineth not at all in us, but that we are wholly freed of it?

Theol. **Not so: for the reliques, and remnants, of our old nature, which the Scripture calleth the old man, do hang about us, and dwell in us, even until our dying day; as it is plainly proved in the ten last verses of the 7 th to the** Romans.

Phil. Then you affirm, that this new man, or new work of grace and regeneration, is unperfect in this life.

Theol. **Yea, for the new creature or new work of grace can never be fully fashioned in this life, but is alwayes in fashioning. And as our faith and knowledge in this life are imperfect, so is our regeneration and sanctification.**

Phil. You said before, that the regeneration or new birth, is of the whole man: which speech seemeth to imply, that the new work of grace is entire and perfect.

Theol. **You mistake the matter. For although the new birth is universal, and of the whole man, yet it is not entire, perfect, pure, and without mixture of corruption: for it is written,** The flesh lusteth against

against the spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. **The Apostle also prayeth that the Thessalonians may be sanctified throughout, in spirit, soul, and body.**

Phil. This seemeth very obscure, I pray you make it more plain.

Theol. **You must note this, that the new work and the old, flesh and spirit, grace and corruption, are so intermingledly joyned together in all the faculties of the soul and body, as that the one doth ever fight against the other.**

Phil. But tell me, I pray you, how you understand this intermingling of grace & corruption in the soul. Do you mean that grace is placed in one part of the soul, & corruption in another, so as they be sundred in place?

Theol. **No, that is not my meaning: but this, that they be joyned and mingled together (as I said) in and throughout the whole man. For the mind or understanding part, is not one part flesh, and another part spirit; but the whole mind is flesh, and the whole mind is spirit, partly one, and partly another. The same is to be said of will and affections.**

Phil. I pray you express it more plainly.

Theol. **Even as the air in the dawning, the day is not wholly light, or wholly dark, as at mid-night, or at noon-day, neither is it in one part light, and in another part dark, but the whole air is partly light & partly dark throughout: & as in a vessel of lube-warm water, the water it self is not only hot nor onely cold, but heat & cold are mixed together in every part of the water, so is the flesh and the spirit mingled to-**

together in the soul of man. And this is the cause why these two contrary qualities fight together.

Phil. Out of doubt this doctrine of regeneration is a very great mystery.

Theol. Yes certainly, it is a secret of secrets, which the wise of this world cannot comprehend,

Phil. Some think that courtesie, kindness, good nurture, good nature, and good education, are regeneration; and that courteous and good natured men, must needs be saved.

Theol. They are generally deceived: for these things do not necessarily accompany salvation, but are to bee found in such as are altogether prophane and irreligious: yet we are to love such good outward qualities, and the men in whom we finde them.

Phil. What say you then to learning, wit and policie? Are not these things of the essence of Religion, and prove a regeneration?

Theol. No, no: for they be external gifts which may be in the most wicked men; as in Papists, Heathen Poets, and Philosophers, yet wee are greatly to reverence learned and wise men, although the new and inward work be not as yet wrought: for that is onely of God that is from above.

Phil. The common people do attribute much to learning and policy; for they will say, Such a man is learned and wise, and knoweth the Scriptures as well as any of them, and yet he doth not thus and thus.

Theol. It is one thing to know the History

story and Letter of the Scripture, and another thing to believe and feel the power thereof in the heart, which is onely from the sanctifying spirit which none of the wise of this world can have.

Phil. It is a common opinion, that if a man hold the truth in judgement, be no Papist or Heretick, but leadeth an honest civil life, then he must of necessity be saved.

Theol. **That followeth not: for many come to farre, which yet notwithstanding have not the inward touch.**

Phil. That seemeth strange. For many will say, As long as they be neither whore nor thief, nor spotted with such like grosse sins, they trust in God they shall be saved

Theol. **They erre, not knowing the Scriptures. For many thousands are in great danger of losing their soules for ever, which are free from such notorious and horrible vices: nay, many which in the world are counted good honest men, good true dealers, good neighbours, and good townsmen.**

Asus. I pray you, sir, give mee leave a little. I have heard all your speech hitherto, and I like reasonable well of it; but now I can forbear no longer, my conscience urgeth mee to speak: For meethinks you go too far, you go beyond your learning in this, that you condemn good neighbours and good townsmen. You say, Many such men are in danger of losing their soules; but I will never believe it while I live: For if such men be not saved, I cannot tell who shall.

Theol. **But you must learn to know out**

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of the Scriptures, that all outward honesty and righteousnesse, without the true knowledge and inward feeling of God; availeth not to eternal life: As our Saviour Christ saith, Except your righteousnes exceed the righteousnes of the Scribes & Pharisees, yee cannot enter into the Kingdom of heaven. It is also written, that when Paul preached at Berea, many honest men and women did believe: that is, such as were outwardly honest, or honest to the world only: for they could not be truely and inwardly honest before they did believe. Therefore you see that this outward honesty and civility, without the inward regeneration of the spirit, availeth not to eternal life: and then consequently, all your honest worldly men are in great danger of losing their souls for ever.

Mat. 5. 20.

Act. 17 13.

Asun. What sound reason can you yeild, why such honest men should bee condemned?

Theol. Because many such are utterly void of all true knowledge of God and his Word. Nay, which is more, many of them despise the Word of God, and hate all the zealous Professors of it. They esteem Preachers but as Prattlers, and Sermons as good Tales; they esteem a Preacher no more then a Showmaker, they regard the Scriptures no more then their old Shoes. What hope is there then I pray you that such men should be saved? Doth not the Holy Ghost say, How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?

Asun. You go too far, you judge too hardly of them.

Theol.

Theol. Not a whit. For all experience sheweth, that they mind, dream and dote of nothing else day and night, but this world, lands and leases, grounds and livings, kine and sheep, and how to wax rich. All their thoughts, words and works, are of these and such like things. And their actions do most manifestly declare, that they are of the earth, and speak of the earth, and there is nothing in them but earth, earth. As for Sermons, they care not how few they hear. And for the Scriptures, they regard them not, they read them not, they esteem them not worth the while, there is nothing more irksome unto them; they had rather pull straws, or do any thing, then hear, read, or confer of the scriptures. And, as the Prophet saith, The Word of the Lord is as a reproach unto men, they have no delight in it. Jer. 6. 10.

Phil. I marvel much, that such men should live so honestly to the world-ward.

Theol. No marvel at all: for many bad men, whose hearts are worm-eaten within: yet for some outward and carnal respects, do abstain from the grosse act of sin: as some for credit, some for shame, some for fear of Law, some for fear of punishment; but none for love of God, for zeal of conscience, or of obedience. For it is a sure thing, that the wicked may have that spirit which doth repress, but not that which doth renew.

Phil. It seemeth then by your speeches, that some which are not regenerate, do in some things excel the children of God.

Theol. Most certain it is, that some of them in outward gifts, and the outward carriage of themselves do go beyond some of the Elect.

Phil. Shew mee, I pray you, in what gifts?

Theol. In learning, discretion, justice, temperance, prudence, patience, liberality, affability, kindness, courtesie, good nature, &c.

Phil. Methinks it should not be possible.

Theol. Yes truely: for some of Gods dear Children, in whom no doubt the inward work is truly and soundly wrought, yet are so troubled and incumbred with a crabbed and crooked nature, and so clogged with some master sin, as some with anger, some with pride, some with covetousnesse, some with lusts, some one way, and some another; all which breaking out in them, do so blemish them and their profession, that they cannot so shine forth unto men, as otherwise no doubt they would: and this is their wound, their grief, and their heart-smart, and that which costeth them many a tear, and many a prayer; and yet can they not get the full victory over them, but still they are left in them, as a prick in the flesh to humble them.

Phil. Yet love should cover a multitude of such infirmities in Gods Children.

Theol. It should do so indeed: but there is great want of love, even in the best: and the world forth espying these infirmities in the godly, run upon them with open mouth, and take upon them to condemn them

them utterly, and to judge their hearts, saying They bee hypocrites, dissemblers, and there is none worse then they.

Phil. But do you not think, that there bee some counterfeits even amongst the greatest professors.

Theol. Yes, no doubt, there be and alwaies have been some very Hypocrites in the Church, but wee must take heed of judging and condemning all for some. For it were very much to condemn Christ and his eleven Disciples because of one Judas; or the whole Primitive Church, for the Ananias and Saphira.

Phil. But I hope you are of this mind, that some regenerate men, even in outward gifts, and their outward carriage, are comparable with many others.

Theol. Questionlesse very many. For they being guided by Gods Spirit, and upheld by his grace, do walk very uprightly and unblamably towards men.

Phil. Yet there resteth one scruple: for it seemeth very strange unto me, that men of so discreet carriage as you speak of, and of so many good parts, should not be saved. It is great pity such men should be damned.

Theol. It seemeth so unto us indeed: but God is onely wise. And you must note, that as there be some infirmities in Gods children, which he correcteth with temporal chastisements, and yet rewardeth their faith, love, and inward service and obedience with eternall life: so there be some good things in the wicked, and them that are without Christ, which God reward-

eth with temporal blessings, and yet punisheth them eternally for their unbeliefe and hardnesse of heart.

Phil. Now you have reasonably well satisfied mee touching the doctrine of regeneration, and the manifold errours and deceits, that are in it, and of it. I pray you let us now proceed: and first of all tell me by what means the new birth is wrought.

1 Pet. 1. 23. Joh. 15. Acts 10. 44. Ephes. 4. 3.

Theol. **By the preaching of the word, as the outward means; and the secret work of the Spirit, as the inward means.**

Phil. Many hear the Word preached, and are nothing the better, but rather the worse: what, I pray you, is the cause of that?

Theol. **Mens own incredulity and hardnesse of heart, because God in his wrath leaveth them to themselves, and depriveth them of his Spirit, without the which all preaching is vain. For except the Spirit do follow the Word into our hearts, we can find no joy, taste nor comfort therein.**

Act. 16 14.

Phil. Cannot a man attain unto regeneration and the new birth, without the Word and the Spirit.

Theol. **No verily. For they are the instruments and means whereby God doth work it.**

Antil. Why may not a man have as good a faith to God-ward that heareth no sermons, as he that heareth all the Sermons in the world?

Theol. **Why may not he that eateth no meat, be as fat and as well-liking, as he that eateth all the meat in the world? for is not the preaching of the Word the food of our soules?**

Antil.

Antil. I like not so much hearing of Sermons, and reading of the Scriptures, except men could keep them better.

Theol. **Faithful and honest hearers do therefore hear, that they may be more able to observe and do; for a man cannot do the will of God before he know it, and he cannot know it without hearing & reading.**

Antil. I marvel what good men do get by gadding to Sermons, and poring so much in the Scripture; or what are they better then others? there are none more full of envy and malice then they: they will do their neighbour a shrewd turn as soon as any body; and therefore in mine opinion, they be but a company of hypocrites and precise fools.

Theol. **You judge uncharitably. Full little do you know what they feel, or what good Gods people get by hearing of the Word. For the work of the Spirit in the hearts of the elect is very secret and altogether hid from the world: as it is written,** The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou heareſt the sound thereof, but canst not tell whither it goeth, or whence it cometh: so is every man that is born of the Spirit. **And again,** The things of God knoweth no men, but the spirit of God. Joh. 3. 8.

Antil. Tush, tush, what needs all this ado? If a man say his Lords Prayer, his ten Commandments, and his Belief, and keep them, and say no body harm, nor do no body harm, and do as he would be done to, have a good faith to God-ward, and be a man of Gods belief, no doubt he shall be saved without all this running to Sermons, and pratling of the scripture.

Theol. **Now you pour it out indeed: you think you have spoken wisely. But, alas! you have bewrayed your great ignorance; for you imagine a man may be saved without the Word, which is a gross error.**

Antil. It is no matter; say you what you will, and all the Preachers in the world besides, as long as I serve God, and say my prayers duly and truely, morning and evening, and have a good faith in God, and put my whole trust in him, and do my true intent, and have a good minde to God-ward, and a good meaning, although I am not learned, yet I hope it will serve the turn for my souls health. For that God which made mee, must save mee. It is not you that can save mee, for all your learning, and all your Scriptures.

Theol. **You may very fitly be compared to a sick man, who having his brain distempered with heat, raveth, and speaketh idely, he cannot tell what. For the Holy** Prov. 28. 9 **Ghost saith,** He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shal be Prov. 13. 13 abominable. **And again,** He that despiseth the Word, shall be destroyed. **So long therefore as you despise Gods Word and turn away your ear from hearing his Gospel preached, all your prayers, your fantastical serving of God, your good meanings, and your good intents are to no purpose; but most odious and loathsome** Isa. 1. 14. **in the sight of God: as it is written,** My soul hateth your new moons, and your appointed feasts; they are a burthen unto mee, I am weary to bear them. When you stretch out your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you;

you; and though you make many prayers, I will not hear: for your hands are full of blood. **And again, the Lord saith by the same Prophet,** He that killeth a bullock, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a Sheep, as if he cut off a Dogs neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swines blood: he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an Idol. **Where you see the Lord telleth you his mind touching these matters; to wit, that all your prayers, services, good meanings,** &c. **are abominable unto him, so long as you walk in ignorance, prophanenesse, disobedience, and contempt of the Gospel: for he saith in the words immediately going before,** To him will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. Isa. 66. 3.

Assu. I grant indeed, for them that are idle, and have little to do, it is not amiss now and then to hear a Sermon, and read the Scriptures: but we have no leisure, we must follow our business, wee cannot live by the Scriptures; they are not for plain folk, they are too high for us, we will not meddle with them. They belong to Preachers and Ministers.

Theol. **Christ saith,** My Sheep hear my voyce, and I give unto them eternal life. **If therefore you refuse to hear the voyce of Christ, you are none of his sheep, neither can you have eternal life. And in another place our Lord Jesus saith,** He that is of God, heareth Gods word. Ye therefore hear it not, because ye are not of God. **St. Paul writing to all sorts of men, both rich** Joh. 10. Joh. 8. 47.

and poor, high and low, men and women, young and old, exhorteth, that the word of Christ may dwell plentiously in them all, in all wisdome. You see therefore that the Apostle would have all sorts of people that have soules to save, to bee well acquainted with the Scriptures. Therefore you may as well say you will not meddle with God, with Christ, nor with everlasting life, as to say, you will not meddle with the Scriptures.

Col. 3. 16.

Assu. Well, I cannot read, and therefore I cannot tell what Christ, or what St *Paul* may say; but this I am sure of, that God is a good man (worshipped might he be) he is merciful, and that we must be saved by our good prayers, and good serving of God.

Theol. You speak foolishly and ignorantly in all that you say, having no ground for any thing you speak, but your own fancy, and your own conceit: and yet you will believe your own fancy against all Preachers, and against all that can bee spoken out of the Word. But I pray you give mee leave a little: if a man dreame that he shall be a king, & in the morning when he is awake, perswadeth himself it shall be so, may he not be justly laughed at as having no ground for it? Even so may all they which believe their own dreams and fantasies touching salvation. But it is true which Salomon saith, A fool believeth every thing: that copper is gold, & a counter an angel. And assuredly great reason there is, that he which will not believe God, should be given over to believe the devil, his dream, and his fancy.

Prov. 14. 15.

Assu.

Asun. I pray you instruct mee better then.

Theol. **You had need indeed to be better instructed; for the Devil hath sildy deluded your soul, and cast a mist before your eyes, making you believe the Crow is white, and that your estate is good before God, whereas indeed it is woeful and miserable.**

Asun. I defie the devil with all my heart. But, I pray you, tell mee how it comes to pass that I am thus deceived?

Theol. **This is it that deceiveth you and many others: that you measure your selves by your selves & by others, which is a false met-wand. For you seem to lie straight, so long as you are measured by your selves and by others, but lay the rule of Gods Word unto you, and then you lie altogether crooked.**

Asun. What other thing is there that deceiveth mee?

Theol. **Another thing that deceiveth you is your own heart: for you know not your own heart, but are altogether deceived therein:** for the heart is deceivable above all things. **He is a wise man, and greatly enlightned, that knoweth his own heart. But you are blind, and know not what is within you; but vainly imagine you shall be saved, and hope you know not what, of eternal life. And because blindnesse maketh you bold, you will seem to be resolute in words, and say, It is pitty he should live which doth any whit doubt of his Salvation. And assuredly you speak as you think, and as you know.** Jer. 17. 9.

For, for ought that you know to the contrary, it seemeth so: though indeed and in truth it is not so: for you are deluded with a false light. And sometimes no doubt you have pricks, gripes, terrors and inward accusations of conscience for all your bold and resolute speeches.

Asun. Truly I never heard so much before.

Theol. That is because you shut your eyes, and stop your ears against God, and all goodness. You are like the deaf Adder, which heareth not the voyce of the charmer, though he be most expert in charming. Psa. 58. 4, 5.

Asun. Well then, if it be so, I would be glad now to learn, if you would teach mee. And as you have shewed mee the means whereby the true birth is wrought, so now shew mee the certain signs and tokens thereof, whereby all men may certainly know that they are sanctified, regenerate, and shall be saved.

Theol. There be eight infallible notes and tokens of a regenerate mind, which may well be termed the eight signs of salvation; and they are these. *Eight infallible signes of salvation.*

A love to the children of God.
A delight in his Word.
Often and fervent prayer.
Zeal of Gods glory.
Denyal of our selves.
Patient bearing of the Crosse, with profit and comfort.
Faithfulnesse in our calling.
Honest, just and conscionable dealing in all our actions amongst men.

Phil. Now that you shewed us the evident signs of mans salvation, shew us also the signs of condemnation.

Theol.

Theol. **The contraries unto these are manifest signs of damnation.**

Eight manifest signes of damnation.

No love to the Children of God.
No delight in his Word.
Seldome and cold prayers.
Coldnes in Gods matters.
Trusting to our selves.
Impatience under the crosse.
Unfaithfulnesse in our calling.
Unhonest and unconscionable dealing.

Phil. No doubt, if a man be infected with these, they be shrewd signs that a man is extreamly soul-sick, and in a very dangerous case. But are there none yet more evident and apparent signes of condemnation then these?

Nine manifest signes of condemnation.

Theol. **Yes verily. There be nine very clear and manifest signs of a mans condemnation.**

Phil. I pray you, let me hear what they be.

Theol. **Pride.**
Whoredome.
Covetousnes.
Contempt of the Gospel.
Swearing.
Lying.
Drunkennes.
Idlenesse.
Oppression.

Phil. These be gross things indeed.

Theol **They may not unfitly be termed the nine Belzebubs of the world; and hee that hath these signs upon him, is in a most woful case.**

Phil. What if a man be infected with some two or three of these?

Theol.

Theol. **Whosoever is infected with three of them, is in great danger of losing his soul. For all these be deadly venome and rank poyson to the soul; and either the three first, or the three last, or the middle three, are enough to poyson the soul, and sting it to death. Nay, to say the truth, a man were as good gripe a toad, and handle a snake, as meddle with any one of these.**

Phil. Is every one of them so dangerous?

Theol. **Questionlesse: For they be the very plague-sores of the soul. If any man have a plague-sore upon his body, we use to say Gods tokens are upon him, Lord have mercy on him: So we may truely say, If any man be throughly and totally infected at the heart with any one of these, Gods tokens are upon his soul, Lord have mercy upon him.**

Phil. many do not think these to be such dangerous matters as you make them, and many there be which make light of them.

Theol. **True indeed: for the most part of men are altogether shut up in blindnesse and hardnesse of heart, having neither sight nor feeling of their sins, and therefore make light of them, thinking there is no such danger.**

Phil. It is most certain, that men are given to lessen and extenuate their sins: or else to hide them, and daub them over with many cunning shifts and vain excuses. For men are ever ready to take covert, and will writhe and wreath (like snakes) to hide their sins: yea, if it were possible, to make sin no sin, to make vertue vice, and vice vertue.

There-

Therefore I pray you lay open unto mee out of the Scriptures, the grievousnes and ugliness of their sins.

Theol. **The stinking filthinesse of these sins, is so great & horrible, that no tongue or pen of man is sufficient fully to manifest and lay open the same, according to the proper nature and being thereof: yet notwithstanding, I will do my endeabour to lay them open in some measure, that all men may the more loathe them.**

Phil. I pray you then, first of all begin with pride.

Theol. **You say well, for that indeed may well stand in the fore-front: sith it is a master-devil, and the master-peck of the soul.**

Phil. Shew mee out of the Scriptures, that pride is so grievous and loathsome.

Theol. Salomon saith, Every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the Lord. Prov. 16. 5. **Which plainly sheweth, that God doth detest and abhor proud men. And is it not a fearful thing, think you, to be abhorred of God? And in the same chapter,** Verse 18. **he saith,** Pride goeth before destruction, and an high mind before a fall: **wherein he sheweth, that pride is the fore-runner of some deadly down fall either by disgracing, or displacing. For it is an old and true proverb,** Pride will have a fall. **And oftentimes, when men are most lifted up, then are they neerest unto it: as the examples of** Haman, Nebuchadnezzar and Herod, **do plainly declare. When the mist swelleth, the rest of the body pineth away,**

away; even so when the heart is puft up with pride, the whole man is in danger of destruction. Moreover, the Holy Ghost saith, The Lord will destroy the house of the proud. Job saith of such kind of men, The sparke of his fire shall not shine; fear shall dwell in his house, and brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation. And in another place he saith, The fire which is not blown shall devour him. Methinks therefore, if there were any spark of grace in us, these terrible speeches, of the Holy Ghost might serve to humble us, and pull down our pride, especially, sith the Scriptures do affirm, that God resisteth the proud, and setteth himself ex professo against them, and therefore wo unto them; for if God take against a man, who can reclaim him? for he doth whatsoever he will.

Job 18. 5. 15.

Job 20. 26.

Phil. But tell mee I pray you, when you speak against pride, what pride is that you mean.

Theol. I mean all pride, both that which is inward in the heart, and that also which breaketh out in mens foreheads: I mean that which apparently sheweth it self in mens words and works.

Phil. Do you mean pride also of mens gifts.

Theol Yes surely: for there is no pride worse or more dangerous then that. Beware, saith one, of spiritual pride: as to be proud of our learning, wit, knowledge, reading, writings, sermons prayers, godlines, policy, valour, strength, riches,

riches, honour, birth, beauty, authority. For God hath not given such gifts unto men, to the end they should make sale-ware of them, and set them a sun-shining to behold; seeking onely themselves with their gifts, the vain praise of the multitude and applause of the people, so robbing God of his honour, and proudly arrogating to themselves, that which is due unto God, which is the praise of his gifts: but he hath given his gifts to another end, namely, that we should use them to his glory, and the good of others, (either in Church or Commonwealth) especially of those which do most concern us.

Phil. Yet we see commonly men of greatest gifts are most proud.

Theol. True indeed; for the finest cloth is soonest stained. And as worms ingender sooner in soft and tender wood then in that which is more hard and knotty; and as moths do breed sooner in fine wool, then in course flocks: even so pride and vain glory do sooner assault an excellent and rare man in all kind of knowledge and vertue, then another of meaner gifts: and therefore pride is said to spring out of the ashes of all Vertues. For men will be proud, because they are wise, learned, godly, patient, humble, &c. Pride therefore may very fitly be compared to the crab-stock spines, which grow out of the root of the very best Apple-tree. Therefore to say the truth, this is one of the last engines and weapons which the devil useth for the overthrowing of Gods own children, even to blow

blow them up with pride, as it were with gun-powder. For as we see it come to pass in the siege of strong holds, when no battery or force of shot will prevail, the last remedy and policy is to undermine it, and blow it up with trains of gun-powder: so when Satan can no way prevail against some excellent servants of God, his last device is to blow them up with pride, as it were with gun-powder.

Phil. I see it is a special grace of God, for men of great gifts to be humble minded: and he is an odd man of a thousand, which excelling in gifts, excelleth in humility; and the more gifts he hath, the more humbly he walks: not contemning others but esteeming them better then himself. For commonly we are the worse for Gods gifts, because we have not the right use of them; and again, because they engender so much proud flesh in us, that we had need daily to be corzied. Therefore God sheweth great favour and mercy to that man, whom he humbleth and taketh down by any afflictions or infirmities whatsoever. For otherwise, it is sure, proud flesh would altogether over-grow us.

Theol. You have spoken the truth: for the Apostle himself confesseth that he was tempted and troubled this way, and had like to have been puffed up out of measure with the abundance of his revelations, but that God in great mercy sent him a cooler and a rebater, to wit, a prick in the flesh, (which he calleth the messenger of Satan) whereby the Lord cured him of his

2 Cor. 12.

his pride. And even so doth he cure many of us of our pride, by throwing us to Sathan, leaving us to our selves, and giving us over to commit some gross evil, even to fall down and break our necks, and all to the end he may humble us, tame us, and pull down our pride, which he seeth we are heart-sick of. It is good for us therefore to be humbled in the abundance of grace, that we be not proud of that which we have, or that which we have done. For humility in sin, is better then pride in well doing.

Phil. Herein surely appeareth the great wisdome and mercy of God: that he so graciously bringeth good out of evil, and turneth our afflictions, infirmities, falls and down-falls, to his glory, and our good.

Theol. It is most true. For even as of the flesh of a Viper is made a soveraign Medicine to cure those which are stung of a Viper; and as Physitians expell poyson with poyson: so God according to his marvailous wisdome, doth, of the infirmities which remain in us after Regeneration, cure other more dangerous diseases; as pride, vain glory and presumption. O blessed therefore be his Name, for ever, which thus mercifully causeth all things to work together for the good of his own people; of whom these things are especially to be understood.

Phil. Is there no cause why men of great gifts should glory in their gifts?

Theol. No surely none at all. For the Apostle

1 Cor. 4. **Apostle saith**, Who separateth thee? And what hast thou that thou hast not received? If thou hast received it, why boastest thou, as though thou hadst not received it? **Where the Apostle plainly sheweth, that no man is to be proud of his gifts, because they are none of his own; he hath but received them to use. We count him worthy to be laughed at as a fool, who having borrowed brave apparel of others (as a silken Gown, a satten Doublet, a chain of Gold, Velvet Breeches, &c.) should proudly set in the streets in them, as if they were his own: even so are they worthy to be chronicled for fools, which are proud of good gifts, which are none of their own. Therefore the Prophet** Jeremiah **saith**, Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength, neither the rich man in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that hee understandeth and knoweth mee. **To this point also well saith the heathen Poet**, No man can escape the punishment of pride: therefore in greatest prosperity be not puffed up.

Jer. 9. 23.

Theocritus.

Phil. Yet it is a wonder to see how proud, surly, haughty, stately, insolent, and thrasonical some be, because of their gifts: they think they touch the clouds with their heads, and that the earth doth not bear them; they take themselves to be petty Angels, or some wonderful wights: they contemn and disdain all others which have not the like gifts: they do contemptuously over-look them, as a Lyon should over-look a Mouse, a King a Begger; or, as we say in a proverb, as the Devil looked over *Lincoln*.

Theol.

Theol. **Oh proud dust! Oh haughty worms meat! If they would bring their hearts before God, and their consciences, thoughts and affections, to be judged by his law, it would soon cool them, and take them down well enough; they should see their wants and imperfections to be so great, that they indeed should have no more cause to boast of their gifts then the Black-more hath of his whiteneſſe, because his teeth are white. The Holy Ghost cuts all our combs, and plucketh down all pride of flesh, when he saith,** Job 36.26. How small a thing doth man understand of God?

Phil. I pray you let us proceed to speak of the outward and gross pride of the world: and first of all tell me what you think of pride in apparel.

Theol. **I think it to be a vanity of all vanities, and a folly of all follies: for to be proud of apparel, is as if a theef should be proud of his halter, a begger of his clouts, a Childe of his gay, or a fool of his bable.**

Phil. Yet we see how proud many (especially women) be of such bables. For when they have spent a great part of the day in tricking and trimming, pricking and pinning, pranking and pouncing, girding and lacing, and braving up themselves in most exquisite manner, then out they come into the streets with their pedlers shop upon their back, and carry their crests very high, taking themselves to be little Angels, or at least somewhat more then other Women. Whereupon they do so exceedingly swell with pride, that it

it is to be feared they will burſt with it as they walk in the ſtreets. And truly we may think, the very ſtones in the ſtreet, and the beams in the houſes, do quake and wonder at their monſtrous, intollerable and exceſſive pride. For it ſeemeth that they are altogether a lump of pride, a maſs of pride, even altogether made of pride, and nothing elſe but pride, pride.

Theol. **You ſéem to be very hot in the matter.**

Aſun. Marry, ſir, I like him the better: for the world was never ſo full of pride as it is now adayes.

Theol. **Alas, alas; indeed who can hold his peace at the pride of this Age! What a thing is it, that fleſh and blood, wormes meat, duſt & aſhes, dirt and dung, ſhould ſo brave it out with their trim clouts, and that in the ſight of God, Angels and men? for the time will come, when both they and all their gay clouts ſhall be buried in a Grave: Yea, as** Job **ſaith,** The grave ſhall be their houſe, and they ſhall make their bed in the dark. And then they ſhall ſay to corruption, Thou art my Father: and to the worm, Thou art my Mother and my ſiſter. **What then ſhall it avail them thus to have ruffled it out in all their bravery, when as ſuddenly they ſhall go down to deſtruction? what did it profit the rich man to be ſumptuouſly cloathed, and fare deliciouſly every day, when his body was buried in the duſt, & his ſoul in hell-fire?**

Job 17. 13, 14

Aſun. I pray you ſir, what ſay you to theſe great ruffs, which are born up with ſupporters

ters and rebatoes, as it were with poſt & rail?

Theol. **What ſhould I ſay? but God be merciful unto us. For ſuch things do draw down the wrath and vengeance of God upon us all: and, as the Apoſtle ſaith,** For ſuch things ſake, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of diſobedience. Col. 3. 6. **And truely, we may well fear, that God will plague us for our abominable pride.**

Aſſu. What ſay you then to theſe doubled and redoubled ruffs, (which are now in common uſe) ſtrouting fardingals, long locks, ſore-tufts, ſhag hair, & all theſe new faſhions which are deviſed and taken up every day?

Theol. **I ſay, they are far from that plainneſſe, ſimplicity and modeſty, which hath bèn in former ages: our fore-fathers knew no ſuch things. It is recorded of** William Ruſus, **ſometime King of this Land, that when his Chamberlain on a time brought him a new pair of hoſe, hè demanded of him what they coſt; who anſwered, Three ſhillings: whereat the King, being ſomewhat moved, commanded him to prepare him a pair of a mark. If Kings were then thought to exceed, that beſtowed a mark upon a pair of hoſe, what is to be thought of many mean men in theſe our daies (yea, ſuch as have no living, & are ſcarce of a good calling) which beſtow as much upon a pair as the King did upon two, when he was thought moſt of all to exceed? But alas, alas, wè have paſſed all bounds of modeſty and meaſure; there is no hoe with us. Our Land is too heavy of this Sinne. For** Grafton's Chron.

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the pride of all Nations, and the follies of all Countries are upon us; how shall wee bear them? And as for these new fashions, the more new they be, the more foolish, and as foolish they that use them. For with our new fashions wee are grown clean out of fashion. If wee had as many fashions of our bodies, as wee have of our attyre, we should have as many fashions as fingers and toes. But vain men and women do apparently shew their vain minds by following so greedily such vain toyes and fashions.

Asun. It was never a good world since starching and steeling, busks and whale-bones, supporters and rebatoes, full moons and hobby-horses, painting and dying, with selling of favour and complexion, came to bee in use. For since these came in, covetousnes, oppression, and deceit have encreased. For how else should pride bee maintained? And sure it is, within these ninety years these things were not known, nor heard of. And what say you then to painting of faces, laying open of naked breasts, dying of hair, wearing of Periwigs, and other hair-coroners, and top-gallants? And what say you to our artificial women, which will be better then God hath made them? They like not his handy-work, they will mend it, and have other complexions, other faces, other hair, other bones, other brests, and other bellies then God made them

Theol. This I say that you and I and all the Lords people, have great and just cause of mourning, weeping and lamentation, because such abomination is commit-

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ted in Israel. Davids eyes gushed out with rivers of tears, because men kept not Gods lawes; and an horrible fear came upon him, because men forsook the law of God. Jeremiah did sigh in secret, wishing that his head were full of water, and his eyes a fountain of tears, because of the sins of the people. Nehemiah mourned for the transgression of Gods people. Lots just soul was vexed with the unclean conversation of the Sodomites: and shall wee mourn nothing at all for these things? Shall we be no whit grieved for the pride of our Land? shall we shed no tears for such horrible and intollerable abominations? They are odious in the sight of God and men: the air stinketh of them. It is Gods marvellous patience that the Devil doth not carry them away quick, and rid the earth of them: or that fire and brimstone doth not come down from Heaven, and consume them. Ps. 119. Jer. 9. 1. Ne. 1. 4.

Antil. You are too hot in these matters of attyre: you make more of them then there is cause.

Asun. I con him thanks: Gods blessing on his heart, I shall love him the better while I know him, because he is so earnest against such shameful and detestable pride. Is it not a shame that Women professing true Religion, should make themselves such pictures, puppets, and peacocks as they do? And yet I hear few Preachers in the Pulpet speak against it.

Antil. I marvel you should be so earnest in matters of apparel. You know well enough that

that apparel is an indifferent thing: and that Religion and the Kingdom of God doth not consist in these things.

Theol. **I know right well that apparel in its own nature is a thing indifferent: but lewd, wanton immodest, & offencive apparel is not indifferent. For all such abuse taketh away the indifferency of them, and maketh them sinful, and as ill by circumstance. For otherwise why should the Lord threaten by his Prophet, that he would visit the Princes and the Kings children, and all such as were clothed with strange apparel, that is, the fashions of other countries?** Zephan. 1. 8. **Again, why should the Lord so plague the proud dames and mincing minions of Jerusalem, for their pride and vanity in attire, if there were no evil in such kind of abuse? The Lord saith thus, in the third of Esay, against those brave and gallant dames,** Because the Daughters of *Sion* are haughty, and walk with stretched out necks, and with wandring eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and make a tinkling with their feet; therefore shall the Lord make the heads of the daughters of *Sion* bald, and the Lord shall discover their secret parts. In that day shall the Lord take away the ornament of the slippers, and the cauls, and the round tires, the sweet balls, and the bracelets, and the bonnets, the tires of the head, and the slops, the head bands, and the tablets, the ear-rings, the rings, and the mufflers, the costly apparel, and the veils, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, and the glasses, and the fine

fine linnen, and the hoods, & the lawns. And instead of sweet savour, there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle, a rent; and instead of dressing the hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloath: and burning instead of beauty. Then shall her gates mourn and lament; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.

Thus we see how terribly the Lord threatneth the gallant dames of Ierusalem, for their excessive and abominable pride. And this may well bee a mirror, for the proud minions of our Age; which assuredly may well fear, the Lord will bring some such judgement upon them as he did upon the daughters of Ierusalem. **For their sin is as great in this kind, as was the Daughters of** Sion, **and God is the same God now that he was then to punish it.**

Antil. Tush, never speak so much of these matters of apparel; for we must do as others do, and follow the fashion, or else we shall not be esteemed.

Theol. **If you follow them not, you shall be more esteemed of God, of his Angels, Saints, and all good men. As for all others, if you esteem them more then these, you shew what you are.**

Antil. Well, for all that, say you what you will, pride is in the heart, and not in the apparel: for one may be proud of plain apparel, as well as of costly. And some are as proud of their falling bands and little sets, as others are of their great ruffs.

Theol. **You speak foolishly, for how know you that? can you judge mens hearts**

and inward affections? can you say when mens and womens apparel is sober, modest and Christian-like, that they have proud hearts, and are proud of that attire? You go very far indeed to judge the heart. You ought to Judge charitably of such as go soberly and modestly attyred, even that their heart is according unto their attyre. And for you, we may rather think your heart is vain, light, & foolish, because your attyre doth strongly argue it. And as the Prophet saith, The tryal of your countenance testifieth against you: you declare your sins as Sodom, & hide them not, *Isa.* 3. 9.

Phil. I pray you then set down some rules for apparel out of the Scriptures.

Theol. I may well set down what I will: but surely most men and women will do what they list. For verily it may be thought that many of this Age have for-sworn God and his word, and all goodnesse. For they are come to this point, let God say what hee will, they will do what they list. For as the Prophet saith, They have made a covenant with Hell, and with death, and are grown to an agreement, *Isa.* 28. 15. And I do verily think, if God himself should come down from heaven in his own person, and dissuade men and women from this Vanity of apparel, yet would they still use it, as it were in despight of God, and, as it were, to anger him the more. For they are so extraordinarily enamoured, and so immoderately delighted with it, & do so continually and altogether dote on it, and are so lewd-mad of

of it, that they will have it, though men and Angels, and all the world say nay: nay, which is more, though they should go to the Devil quick with it. And therefore it is but lost labour to speak against it, preach against it, or write against it. It is but even to plow the Sea, or knock at a deaf mans door; for there is no hope of any Reformation. Onely this we gain, that the world is reproved and convicted of sin. And these things shall stand in a record against them, in the last day: so that they may say they had a fair warning, and that there was a Prophet among them.

Phil. Yet for all this, I pray you set us down some Directions and Rules out of Gods Holy Book, concerning attire. For albeit some be very bad and outragious in these things, yet there be some others which are well disposed, and will (no doubt) make some conscience to frame themselves according to the Rule of Gods Word.

Theol. Well then for their sakes which are well disposed, I will set down some few directions. St. Paul in 1 Tim. 2. 9. willeth that women should array themselves in comely apparel, with shamefastnesse and modesty, as becometh women that professe the fear of God: and not with broidered hair, or gold or pearls, or costly Apparel. The Apostle St. Peter giveth like rules also; for he saith, speaking of Christian Matrons, and Professors of holy Religion, That their apparel must not be outward, that is, must consist so much 1 Pet. 3. 3.

in outward brabery; as broidered hair, gold put about, &c. as it must be inward, that the hid man of the heart may be clothed with a meek and quiet spirit, which is a thing before God much set by. For after this manner, **saith he,** in times past the holy women which trusted in God, did attyre themselves; **as** Sarah, Rebecka, Rachel, **and such like ancient and grave Matrons.**

Phil. Wherein doth this inward clothing specially consist?

Theol. **In four things, which are set down in the fore named places, to wit, shamefac'onelss modesty, a quiet spirit, and a meek spirit.**

Phil. These Be fine suits of apparel indeed; I would all women would put them on, and never put them off, but wear them continually; for they are the better for wearing, though all other apparel be the worse.

Theol. **If women would deck themselves inwardly with these aforesaid Vertues, they would be unto them as ornaments of gold, and jewels of pearl.** For the woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised

Prov. 31. 30.

Phil. But now, I pray you, Sir, set down your judgement for outward attire.

Theol. **This is all that I can say touching that point. That it must be as the Apostle saith, comely, decent, handsome, neat and seemly; not light, not wanton, not lascivious, not immodest, not offencive**

Phil. But who shall judge what is comely, sober, handsome, modest? &c. For every man and woman will say, their apparel is decent, and cleanly, how gallant, brave, and flaunting soever they be.

Theol.

Theol. Herein the examples of the most godly, wise, grave, and modest men and women are to be followed; for who can better judge, what is comely sober and modest, then they?

Phil. But we see some, even of the better sort, in this matter are a little infected, run out, and go beyond their bounds.

Theol. The more is the pity. But alas, we see the sway of the time, and rage of the stream is so violent, that it carrieth before it, whatsoever is not settled, and very deep rooted. And some Godly and well-disposed persons, whose hearts are not with these things but with God, are notwithstanding perforce carried away with the violence of the wind and Tide; whose case, though it cannot well be defended or excused, yet it is to be pitied & lamented.

Phil. Have you any further directions touching this point?

Theol. There is one thing yet more to be added: to wit, that attire be according to mens places callings and degrees. For that is not seemly for one, that is seemly for another; that becomes not one mans place, becometh anothers: For that is not meet for poor men, which is meet for rich men: nor that meet for mean men, which is meet for men of note and great place.

Phil. Then you think it is lawful for Kings, Princes, and great personages to wear pearl, gold, silver, and velvet, &c.

Theol. Questionlesse it is lawful for such, in sober manner and measure to wear the most costly and precious things which

the earth can afford: and that to set out the Magnificence, Pompe, and glory of their places: and therefore such things are in them most comely and decent.

Phil. But now adayes few will keep within compass, few will know their places, but the most part run beyond their bounds, and leap quite out of their sockets.

Theol. True indeed: for now adayes mean Gentlewomen, yea, some Gentlewomen of their own making, will ruffle it, and brave it out in their attyre like Countesses and Ladies of honour. Plain folk also in the Country, will flaunt it like Courtiers, and like good Gentlemen and Gentlewomen; and they seem to say in their hearts, Fie on this plainness, we will have no more of it, we will not take it as we have done: So that now the old Proverb is verified: Every *Jack* will be a Gentleman, and *Joan* is as good as my Lady. For now we cannot by their apparel, discern the Maid from the Mistresse, nor the waiting Gentlewoman from her Lady: And thus we see in this matter of apparel how all is out of joynt.

Phi. Is there any more to be said in this case?

Theol. There is yet another thing to be respected in this matter of attire.

Phil. What is that?

Theol. That is to be according to mens abilities. For it is lamentable to consider, how poor men and women, poor hired servants, milk-maids, and such like, go quite beyond their abilities. And more lamentable to see what wretched and ill-fa-

favoured shifts they make to compasse these things: so sharp and so eagerly are they set upon them.

Phil. Well Sir, now you have sufficiently rolled the stone, and at large satisfied us touching the matter of Pride; which is the first sign of condemnation. Now proceed to the second, which is Whoredome; and unfold unto us out of the Scriptures the danger thereof.

Theol. Salomon **in his Proverbs saith,** That the mouth of a strange woman [or an Harlot] is as a deep pit; he that is a detestation to the Lord shall fall therein. **Wherein he plainly sheweth, that those whom God detesteth, and is exceeding angry with, are given over to this Vice. And in another place he saith,** A whore is as a deep ditch, and as a narrow pit. **Noting thereby, that if a man be once fallen in with an Harlot, he shall as hardly get out again, as a man that is plunged into a very deep and narrow pit, where he can scant stir himself. The same** Solomon, **in the Book** of Ecclesiastes **yeilds us the reason hereof, namely, because she is as nets, snares, and bands, wherein if a man be once taken, he is fast enough for getting out.** I find, **saith he,** more bitter then death, the woman whose heart is as nets and snares, and her hands as bands. He that is good before God, shall be delivered from her; but the sinner shall bee taken by her. **Wee do therefore plainly see in what a labyrinth and dangerous case they be that are left of God, and given over to whoredome and**

Prov. 22. 14.

Prov. 23. 27.

Eccl. 7. 26.

harlots: and therefore it is said, Desire not her beauty in thine heart, neither let her eye-lids catch thee: for by a whorish woman, a man is brought to a morsel of bread; and the Adulteress hunteth for life which is precious. **And again, he saith,** Albeit the lips of an harlot drop as an hony-comb, and the roof of her mouth is softer then Oyl; yet her latter end is as bitter as wormwood, and as sharpe as a two-edged Sword. **All these prudent speeches of the Holy Ghost, do most evidently shew unto us what a fearful thing it is to commit Whoredome, and so to fall into the hands of Whores and Harlots. Therefore** Job **saith of the wicked,** Their soul dyeth in youth, and their life among the whoremongers.

Prov. 6. 25.

Prov. 5. 3, 4.

Job 36. 14.

Phil You have very well shewed out of Gods Book, the great danger of Whoredome and Adultery. And it is greatly to bee lamented, that men in this age make so light of it as they do, and that it is so common a vice; nay that some (alas with grief I speak it!) do professe it, live by it, and prostitute themselves wholly unto it.

Theol. **Such men and women may suitly fear the plaguing hand of God: for the Lord saith by his Prophet;** Though I fed them to the full, yet they committed adultery, and assembled themselves by companies in harlots houses. They rose up in the morning like fed Horses, for every man neighed after his neighbours Wife. Shall I not visit for these things saith the Lord? shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation?

Jer. 5. 7.

Phil. Methinks if men were not altoge-

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ther hardned in this sin, and even past feeling, and past grace, this threatning and thundering of God himself from Heaven should terrifie them.

Theol. **If man would think so indéed: but now we may take up the old complaint of the Prophet,** I hearkned and heard, and loe, no man spake aright: no man repented him of his evil, saying, What have I done? Every one turneth to their race, as the horse rusheth into the battel. Jer. 8. 6.

Antil. Tush, whoredome is but a trick of youth; and we see all men have their imperfections.

Theol. **You speak prophanely and wickedly: For shall we count that but a trick of youth, for the which the Lord smote three and twenty thousand of his own people in one day? Shall we count that but a trick of youth, for the which the Lord threatned David his own Servant, that the Sword should never depart from his house? Shall we count that a trick of youth, for the which Hamor and Sechem, the father and the Son, with many other, both men, women and children were cruelly murthered, by Simeon and Levi, the Sons of Jacob? Shall we count that but a trick of youth, for the which the Lord slew Hophni and Phineas, the two Sons of Eli the Priest, in the battel of the Philistines? Shall wee thus set all at six and seven, and make light of such horrible Villainies? Doth not the severity of the punishment, shew the greatnesse of the sin?** 1 Cor. 10 8. 2 Sam. 12. 10. Gen. 34. 25. 1 Sam. 4. 11.

1 Cor. 10. 11. **Doth not the Apostle say, These things came unto them for our examples, upon whom the ends of the world are come? And yet you passe it over with a tush, and a trick of youth, as if God were to be dallied with. No, no, be not deceived, God is not mocked. They which will not be moved now in hearing, shall one day be crushed in pieces in feeling. And they which now call whoredome a trick of youth, shall one day howle and cry, yell and yelp for such tricks, with wo and alas that ever they were born.**

Antil. Oh sir, you must bear with youth; youth you know is frail, and youth will be youthful when you have said all you can:

Theol. **Yea, but God doth allow no more liberty to youth, then unto age: but bindeth all upon pain of death, to the obedience of his commandments. The Apostle saith,** Let young men be sober minded. Tit. 2. 6. David **saith,** wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? in taking heed thereto according to thy word. Psal. 119. 9. **The wise man saith,** Remember thy creator in the daies of thy youth: Eccl. 12. 1. **and further addeth, that if they will needs follow their lusts, their pleasures & their own swinge, yet in the end he will bring them to Judgement, arraign them, condemn them, and tame them in hell-fire well enough.**

Phil. Yet we see men are so violently carryed after their lusts, and so desperately bent that they will have the present sweet and pleasure of sin, come of it what will. Come sickness, come death, come Hell, come damnation,

nation, they are at a point; they will pay the highest price for their lust. They will purchase their pleasures with the loss of their souls. O woful purchase! O damnable pleasures!

Theol. **Sweet meat will have sower sauce, and a dram of pleasure a pound of sorrow. Such cursed caitifs shall at last pay a dear shot for their pleasures. Such desperate wretches shall one day know (to their everlasting wo) what it is to provoke God, and to sin with so high an hand against him. They shall well know in spight of their hearts, that Vengeance is prepared for the wicked, and that there is a God that Judgeth the earth. Let all men therefore take heed in time;** for whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge. Hebr. 13. 4. **And the Apostle saith flatly,** That whoremongers and adulterers shall not inherit the Kingdome of God, 1 *Cor.* 6 9. Let therefore no fornicator, or unclean person be found amoug us, as was Esau: but let us abstain from fleshly lusts, which fight against the soul. And let every one know how to possess his vessel in holinesse and honour, and not in the lust of concupilcence, as the Gentiles which know not God, 1 *Thes* 4 4. Hebr. 12. 1 Per. 2. 11.

Herein let us consider the wise speech of an ancient Father: sin, while it is in doing ministreth some pleasure; but when it is committed, the short pleasure thereof vanisheth away, and long sorrow cometh instead of it. **Neither let us here reject the saying of a wise Heathen:** Shun pleasure for fear of smart. Sowre things follow sweet, and joy heavinesse. *Antis* Chrys. *in* Mat. Isocrat. ad Demon.

Anvil. Yet for all this, you shall not make mee believe, that whoredome is so haineous a matter. You make more of it then it is.

Theol. **True indeed: for you and such as you are will believe nothing against your lusts and fleshly delights: and that is the cause why you are deaf on this ear. I will therefore add a word or two more (out of the Oracles of God) to that which hath been spoken. The wise King** Prov. 6. 32. **saith,** He that committeth Adultery with women, destroyeth his own soul: **and so is accessary to his own death; which is no small matter. For we use to say, if a man hang himself, drown himself, or any manner of way make away himself, that he was cursed of God, that Gods hand was heavy against him, that the devil ought him a shame, and now he hath paid it him. And all the Countrey rings of such a strange accident, when and where it falleth out: and the Coroner of the Country doth sit upon it. How much more may all the world wonder at this; that a man should destroy his own soul, and wittingly and willingly cast away himself for ever? Now the Holy Ghost saith, The Adulterer doth such an act, giveth such a venture, and willingly murthereth himself. Oh therefore wo unto him that ever he was born! for sure it is, that the great Coroner of Heaven, that crowns whom he will crown, shall one day sit upon it, and give judgement. Moreover, as the Adulterer sinneth against his soul, so he also sinneth against his**

his body, after a special manner, as witnesseth the Apostle. Also hee sinneth against his goods and outward estate, as the holy man Job testifieth, saying. Adultery is a fire that devoureth to destruction, and it will root out all our increase. Furthermore, he sinneth against his name. For the Adulterer shall find a wound, and dishonour; and his reproach shall never be put away. 1 Cor. 6. 18. Job. 31. 12. Prov. 6. 33.

Item, He sinneth against his Wife, who is his companion, and the wife of his covenant: And God saith in the same place, Let none trespass against the Wife of his youth: keep your selves in your spirit, and transgress not. Last of all, he sinneth against his Children and posterity, as the Lord said to David, because thou hast despised mee, and done this, therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house. Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house. Mal. 2. 14. & 15. 2 Sam. 12. 10.

Now therefore to conclude this point, we may see how many deadly woundsmen make themselves by committing of Adultery: They wound themselves in their souls: they wound themselves in their bodies: they wound themselves in their goods: they wound themselves in their names: they wound themselves in their wives, and in their children.

What man, except he were starke mad, would thrust in himself in so many places at one time? The Adulterer with his one sin of Adultery, maketh all these deadly Wounds in himself: and it is

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an hundred to one he will never get them cured, but will die, and bleed to death of them. Lo thus you see the dangerous quality and condition of this sin. Shall we now therefore make light of it? Shall we say, it is but a trick of youth? Shall we smooth over the matter with sweet words, when the Holy Ghost maketh it so hainous and capital? Shall we make nothing of that which draweth down Gods wrath upon the soul, body, goods, name, wife and children? That were an intollerable blindnesse, and most extream hardnes of heart. An antient Writer hath long ago passed sentence upon us, who make so light of this sin: for (saith he) Adultery is the very hook of the Devil, whereby he drawerh us to destruction. And another Godly Father saith, That Adultery is like a furnace, whose mouth is gluttony, the flame pride, the sparkles filthy words, the smoak an ill name, the ashes poverty, and the end shame. And so we plainly see, that howsoever we regard not this sin, but flatter our selves in it, yet those whose eyes the Lord hath opened, have in all ages condemned it as most flagitious and horrible: yea, the very Heathen will rise up in Judgement against us, who have spoken and written many things against this filthy and beastly vice.

Basil *in Epist.*

Gregory.

Phil. Now indeed you have sufficiently branded the vice of Adultery, and laid out the uglines thereof, that all men may behold it stark naked, and abhor it. If any man (not-

(notwithstanding all this) will venture upon it, he may be said to be a most desperate Monster. For what doth he else but (as it were) put his finger into the Lyons mouth, and (as it were) take the bear by the tooth? and they may well know what will follow, and what they may look for. Let all men therefore in time take heed to themselves, and to their own souls, as they will answer it at their uttermost peril, at the dreadful day of Judgement, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed. But now one thing resteth; to wit, that you should shew us the special rootes and causes of Adultery.

Theol. **There be five special causes of it: The first is our natural corruption: for the very spawn and seed of all sin is our corrupt nature: and this of all other is a most inherent sin, as witnesseth the Apostle** James, **saying,** When lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin when it is perfected bringeth for death. Jam. 1. 15.

The second is gluttony and fulnesse of bread: For when men have filled their bellies, and crammed their paunches as full of good chear, wine and strong drink as their skins can hold, what are they meet for, or what minde they else, but adultery and uncleanness? And therefore well saith one, Great nourishment, and gross food is the shop of Lust. **The Heathen Poet could skill to say,** *Sine Cerere & Baccho friget Venus*, Without meat and drink, lust waxeth cold. **And to this effect the wise King saith,** that their eyes shall behold strange women, whose hearts are set upon Prov. 23. 31. & 33.

upon wine & belly-chear. And therefore he adviseth all men, not to look upon the wine when it appeareth red, when it sheweth his colour in the cup, or stirreth very kindly: and that for fear of this after-clap. An ancient Writer saith to the same purpose: He that delicately pampereth his belly, and yet would overcome the spirit of fornication, is like to him that would quench a flame of fire with oyl.

Gregor. Nazianz.

Therefore to close up this point, sure it is, though men pray, hear and read much, and be otherwise well disposed, yet except they be abstemious in diet, they will be much troubled with Lust.

The third cause of Adultery is idlenesse: for when men are lazy, lustish, and idle, having nothing to do, they lye wide open to adultery, and lust creepeth into them. Some Historiographers write the Crab fish is very desirous to eat Oysters; but because she cannot perforce open them, she watcheth her time, when they open themselves to the Sun after the tide, and then she putteth in her claw, and pulleth out the Oyster: Even so Satan watcheth his opportunity against us, that he may infect and breath into us all filthy lusts, & adulterous desires, when we lye open unto him by idlenesse. Wisely therefore to this point saith the Greek Poet: Much rest nourisheth Lust. And another Poet saith:

Hesiodus.

Quæritur Ægystus quare sit factus adulter:
Is promptus causa est; desidiosus erat.

Sloathful lazinesse is the cause of adultery:

And

And therefore another saith, Eschew idlenes, and cut the very sinews of Lust.

Otia si tollas periere Cupidinis, arcus.

The fourth cause of Adultery, is wanton apparel: which is a minstrelleste, that pipes up a dance unto whoredome. But of this enough before.

The fifth and last cause of Adultery, is the hope of impunity, or escaping of punishment. For many being blinded and hardened by Satan, think they shall never be called to any account for it; because they can blear the eyes of men, and carry this sin so closely under a cloud, that it shall never come to light, they think all is safe, and that God seth them not. And therefore Job saith, The eye of the Adulterer waiteth for the twie-light, and saith no eye shall see mee. And in another place, How shall God know? Can he judge thorow the darke Cloud? But verily, verily, though the Adulterer do never so closely and cunningly convey his sin under a canopy, yet the time will come when it shall be disclosed to his eternal shame. For God will bring every worke to judgement, with every secret thought, whether it be good or evil. For he hath set our most secret sins in the sight of his countenance. And hee will lighten the things that are hid in darknes, and make the counsels of the heart manifest. For this cause Job saith, When I sin, thou watchest mee, and wilt not purge mee from my sin.

Job 24. 15.

Ecc. 12. 14.

Psal 90.

1 Cor 4.

Job 10. 14.

Phil. Now you have shewed us the causes of adultery, I pray you shew us the remedies.

Theol. There be six remedies for adultery,

tery, which no doubt will greatly prevail, if they be well practiked:

Phil. Which be they?

Six remedies for Adultery.

Theol. **Labour, Abstinence, Temperance, Prayers, Restraint of our sences, Shunning of womens company, and all occasions whatsoever.**

Phil. Well sir, now you have waded deep enough in the second sign of damnation: I pray you let us proceed to the third, which is Covetousness. And as you have laid naked the two former, so I pray you, strip this stark naked also, that all men may see what an ugly Monster it is, and therefore hate it, and abhor it.

Theol. **I would willingly satisfie your minde; but in this point I shall never do it sufficiently. For no heart can conceive, nor tongue sufficiently utter the loathsomeness of this Vice; for Covetousnesse is the lowest fiend, and blackest Devil of all the rest. It is even the great Belzebub himself. Therefore I shall never be able fully to describe it unto you: but I will do what I can to strip and whip it starke naked. And howsoever the men of this earth, and blind worldlings take it to be most sweet beautiful and amiable, and therefore do embrace it, entertain it, and welcome it, as though there were some happinesse in it: yet I hope when I have shewed them the face thereof in a glasse (even the true glasse of Gods word) they will be no more in such love, but quite out of conceit with it. I will therefore hold out this glasse unto them.**

St. Paul to Timothy, **brandeth this sin in the fore-head, and boareth it in the ears, that all men may know it and avoid it**, when he saith, Covetousness is the root of all evil. **Our Lord Jesus also giveth us a watch-word to take heed of it, saying**; Take heed and beware of covetousness. **As if he should say, touch it not, come not near it; it is the very breath of the Devil, it is present death, and the very Rats-bane of the soul. The Apostle layeth out the great danger of this sin, and doth exceedingly grind the face of it, when he saith,** That the end of all such as mind earthly things is damnation. **Let all carnal worldlings and muckish minded men lay this to heart, and consider well of it; lest they lay one day, Had I wist.**

1 Tim. 6. 10.

Luk. 12. 15.

Phil. 3. 19.

Phil. Good Sir, lay open unto us the true nature of Covetousness, and what it is, that we may more perfectly discern it.

Theol. **Covetousness is an immoderate desire of having.**

Phil. I hope you do not think frugality, thriftiness, and good husbandry, to be covetousness.

Theol. **Nothing lesse: for they be things commanded: being done in the fear of God, and with a good conscience.**

Phil. Do you not think it lawful also for men to do their worldly business, and to use faithfulness and diligence in their callings, that they may provide for themselves and their families?

Theol. **Yes no doubt; and the rather, if they do these things with calling upon**

God

God for a blessing upon the works of their hands, & use prayer & thanksgiving before and after their labour, taking heed all the day long of the common corruptions of the world, as swearing, cursing, lying, dissembling, deceiving, greedy getting, &c.

Phil. Wherein I pray you doth covetousnes especially consist.

Theol. In the greedy desire of the mind. For we may lawfully do the works of our Calling, and play the good Husbands and good Housewives: but wee must take heed that distrustfulnesse and inward greedinesse of the world do not catch our hearts. For then we are set on fire, and utterly undone.

Phil. Sith covetousnes is especially of the heart, how may we know certainly when the heart is infected?

Theol. There be four special signs of the hearts infection.

Phil. Which be they?

Theol. The first is an eager and sharpset desire of getting. Therefore the Holy Ghost saith, Hee that hasteth to be rich shall not bee unpunished. And again, An Heritage is hastily gotten at the beginning: but the end thereof shall not bee blessed. The Heathen man also saith, No man can be both justly and hastily rich.

Prov. 28. 22.

Prov. 20. 21.

Dem. in Olin. 2.

The second is a pinching and niggardly keeping of our own: that is, when men (being able to give) will hardly part with any thing, though it be to never so holy and good use. And when at last, with much ado, for shame they give something,

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it cometh heavily from them (God wot) and scantly.

The third is the neglect of holy duties: that is, when mens mindes are so taken up with the love of earthly things, that they begin to slack and cool in matters of Gods worship.

The fourth and last is a trusting in riches, and staying upon them, as though our lives were maintained by them, or did consist onely in them: which thing our Lord Jesus flatly denieth, saying, Though a man have abundance, yet his life consisteth not in the things that he hath. Luk. 12. 15.

These then are four evident signs and tokens whereby we may certainly discern that mens hearts and entrails are infected with covetousnesse.

Phil. You have very well satisfied us in this point, Now let us understand the original causes of covetousnes.

Two causes of Covetousnes.

Theol. There be two special causes of covetousnesse: The one is the ignorance and distrust of Gods Providence.

The other is the want of tasting and feeling of Heavenly things. For till men taste better things, they will make much of these: till they feel Heaven, they will love earth: till they be religious, they will be covetous. Therefore the cause is soon espyed, why men are so sharpe set upon these outward things, and do so admire riches, worldly pomp, pleasures, and treasures: Because the know no better, they never had taste nor feeling of those things which are eternal.

Phil.

Phil. Now as you have shewed us the causes of covetousnes, so let us also hear of the effects.

Theol. If I once enter into this, I shall be intangled, & wound up in a maze, where I know not how to get out again. For the evil effects of this Vice are so many, and so great, that I know not almost where to begin, or where to end. Notwithstanding, I will enter into it, get out how I can.

Phil. If you do but give us some taste of them, it shall suffice.

Theol. Then will I briefly dispatch things in order. And first of all, I reason from the words of the Apostle before alledged, That if Covetousnes and the love of mony be the root of all evil, then it is the root of idolatry, the root of murther, the root of theft, the root of lying, the root of swearing, the root of symony, the root of bribery, the root of usury the root of Lawing, the root of all contentions in the Church, and the root of all brabling and brawling in the Common-wealth. Moreover, it spreadeth far and near, it dwelleth in every house, in every Town, in every City: it pryeth into every corner, it creepeth into every heart: it annoyeth our Physicians, it infecteth our Divines, it choaketh our Lawyers, it woundeth our Farmers, it baneth our Gentlemen, it murthereth our Tradesmen, it bewitcheth our Merchants, it stingeth our Mariners. O covetousnes, Covetousnesse! It is the poyson of all

things

things, the wound of Christianity, the bane of all goodness. For Covetousnesse marres all; it marreth all every where, in all places, in all degrees, among all Persons. It marreth marriages; for it completh young to old, and old to young. It marreth Hospitality, it marreth all good Housekeeping, it marreth Almes-deeds, it marreth Religion, it marreth Schollers, it marreth Ministers, it marreth Magistrates, it marreth all things. And therefore what sin so grievous, what evil so odious, what Vice so enormous as this? For this cause it was prettily said of one, That all other Vices are but Factors to covetousnesse, & serve for Post-rs to fetch and bring in her living. She marketh symony her drudg, bribery her drudg, usury her drudge, deceit her drudge, swearing her drudge, lying her drudge. O what a Devil incarnate is this, that setteth so many Vices a work, & hath so many factors and underlings to serve her turne! Are they not in a pretty case think you, that are infected with this sin? O they are in a most miserable case. It had been good they had never been born. For being alive, they are dead; dead I mean in their souls. For covetousnesse is souls poyson, and souls bane. Covetousnesse is the strongest poyson to the soul that is. It is a confection of all the Spiders, Toads, Snakes, Adders, Scorpions, Basilisks & all other the most Venemous Vermine of the whole world. If the devil can get us to take down but one penny weight

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of it, it is enough, he desires no more, for presently we fall down starke dead: therefore the Apostle saith, They that will bee rich (he meaneth in all hast, by hook or by crook) fall into temptations, and snares, and into many foolish and noysome lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For as Covetousnes is rank poyson to the soul: so the Apostle compareth it to a deep gulf, wherein thousands are drowned. And therefore he addeth in the same place, But thou, O man of God, flie these things. In which Words hee doth most gravely advise all the Ministers of the Word of God to take heed of it. For as it is dangerous in all men: so it is most dangerous and offencive in Preachers of the Gospel.

1 Tim. 6. 9.

Phil. Indeed it must needs be granted, that covetousnes is a very grievous sin: yea, even a Monster with seaven heads. Yet for all that, we see in this our Iron Age, how many of all sorts are infected with it, and how few will give any thing to an holy use. Most men now adaies have nothing to spare for Christ, nothing for his Gospel, nothing for his Church, nothing for the poor Children of God, and needy members of Christ. Christ is little beholding unto them: for they will do nothing for him, no, not so much as speak a good word in his cause, or the cause of his poor Saints. Every little thing with them is too much for God, and good men. For when they come to giveing unto holy & necessary Uses, then they will stick at a penny, and grudge at a Groat, and every thing is too much:

much: But to bestow upon themselves, nothing is too much. Nothing is too much for lust, for pleasure, for back, for belly, building, for cards and dice, for whores and harlots, for rioting and revelling, for taverns and brothel-houses. Hundreds and thousands are little enough, and too little for their expences this way. It is lamentable to consider what masses of money are spent and bestowed upon these things. But alas, alas, how heavy an account are they to make in the day of the Lord, which so spend their Lands, Livings and revennues! I quake to think what shall become of them at last. It were well for them, if they might be in no worse case then a Crocodile or a Cur-dog.

Theol. **It is most certain that you say: and we all have great cause to lament it, and to take up the old complaint of the Prophet** Jeremiah, **saying,** From the least of them, even unto the greatest of them, every one is given unto covetousness: and from the Prophet even unto the Priests, they all deal falsly. **And another Prophet saith,** They build up *Zion* with blood, and *Jerusalem* with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for rewards, and the Priests thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof prophesie for money: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord amongst us? No evil can come unto us. **But these holy Prophets and men of God do fully describe unto us the state of our time; wherein, though all be corrupted; yet we bear ourselves stoutly upon God, we presume of his favor, because of our outward**

Mic. 3. 10.

profession, and say in our hearts. No evil can come unto us.

Asun. You say very true, Sir, The world was never so set upon covetousness, and men were never so greedily given to the world, as now adayes. And yet (in truth) there is no cause why men should be so sharpe set upon this world. For this world is but vanity: and all is but pelf and trash. Fie on this muck.

Phil Many such men as you are, can skill to give good words, and say, Fie on this world, all is but vanity; and yet for all that, in your daily practise, you are nevertheless set upon the world, nor never the more seek after God. You hear the Word of God no whit the more, you read no whit the more, you pray never the more, which evidently sheweth, That all your fair speeches and protestations are nought else but hypocrisie and leazing. Your heart is not with God, for all this. All is but words, there is no such feeling in the heart, and therefore I may justly say to you, as God himself said to his people, This people have said well, all that they have said. Oh, that there were an heart in them to fear mee, and keep my commandments!

Deut. 5. 29.

Theol. **His words indeed are good, if his heart were according. For all things considered, there is no cause why men should be so given to this world, for they must leave it, when they have done all that they can. As we say, To dayes man, to morrow none. And as the Apostle saith,** 1 Tim. 6. We brought nothing into this world; and

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it is certain we shall certy nothing out thee must all dye, we know not how soon: why therefore should men set their hearts upon such incertainties, & deceivable things? for all things in this world are more light then a feather, more fleeting then a shadow more banishing then smoak, more uncon stant then the winde: Doubtless, saith the Prophet David, man walketh in a shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain; he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them. I wonder therefore that these Moles and muckworms of this earth should so minde these shadowish things, and so dote on them as they do. If they were not altogether hardned and blinded by the Devil, they would not be so nearly knit to the clod, and the penny, as they are; thinking, and alwaies imagining, that there is no happinesse but in these things which are but dung and dross: & at last they will give us the slip, when we thinke our selves most sure of them. Psal. 39. 6.

The wise King, who had the greatest experience of these things that ever man had, for he enjoyed whatsoever this world could afford, upward and downward, backward and forward, yet could he find nothing in them but Vanity and vexation of Spirit. Moreover, he flatly avoucheth, That all these things, riches, wealth, honour, pleasures and treasures, will most notably deceive us in the end, give us the slip, and be gone. For he compareth riches, and all the glory of the world to an Ea-

gle or Hawke, which a man holdeth upon his fist, stroketh her, maketh much of her, taketh great delight and pleasure in her, and saith, Hee will not take ten pounds for her; yet all on the sudden she taketh her flight, and flyeth up into the air, and hee never seeth her more, nor she him. The words of the Holy Ghost are these, Wilt thou cause thine eyes to flye after them, (meaning riches)? Thou mayst; but they will not be found. For they will make themselves wings like to the Eagle, which flyeth up to Heaven. From thence we may learn, that though we set our hearts never so much on any thing here below, yet at the last it shal be taken from us, or we from it. Therefore all worldly men do but weave the spiders web, and may fitly be compared to the silly spider, who toyleth her self, and laboureth all the week long to finish up her web, that she may lodge her self in it, as in her own house, and freehold. But alas! at the weeks end, a Maid, in a moment, with one brush of the broom, dispossesseth her of her inheritance, which shee had purchased with great labour and much ado. Even so, when the men of this world have with much care and travel, purchased great Lands and Revenues, and gathered all that they can; yet on the sudden, death (with one stroke of his direful dart) will make them give up the Ghost, and then where are they? It was prettily therefore said of a man in the light of nature, No man hath ever lived so happily in this life, but in his life-time

Seneca.

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many things have befallen him, for the which he hath wished rather to dye then to live. And assuredly I think there was never any man lived any one day upon the face of the earth, but some grief or other either did, or justly might invade his mind ere night; either in the temptations of the World, the Flesh, or the Devil; or in regard of soul, body, goods or name; in regard of wife, children, friends or neighbours: in regard of dangers to Prince, State, Church or Common-wealth: in regard of casualties, and losse by Water, by fire, by Sea or by land. What a life therefore is this, that hath not one good day in it? who would desire to dwell long in it? For it lyeth open every day to manifold miseries, dangers, losses casualties, reproaches, shame infamy, poverty, sickness, diseases, cholicks, agues, tooth-ache, head-ache, back-ache, bone-ache, and a thousand calamities.

Phil. You have very well described unto us, the vanity of this life, and that no day is free from one sorrow or other, one grief or other: the which thing our Lord Jesus ratifieth in the reason which hee bringeth why men should not distrustfully care for to morrow. For, saith he, sufficient to the day is the evil thereof: Or, as some read it, The day hath enough with his own grief. Wherein he doth plainly shew that every day hath his sorrow, his evil, his grief, and his 'thwart. But, I pray you, proceed further in this point.

Theol. This I say further: That when

men have swinked and sweat, carked and cared, moiled and turmoiled, drudged and dotted by night and by day, by Sea and by land, with much care and sorrow, much labour and grief, to rake together the things of this life; yet at last all will away again, and we must end where we
Job 1. began. For as Job said, Naked we came into the world, and naked we must go out. For even as a Wind-mill beateth it self, maketh a great noyse, whistleth and whistleth about, from day to day, all the year long, yet at the years end standeth still where it began, being not moved one foot backward or forward: so when men have blustered and blown all that they can, and have even run themselves out of breath, to scrape up the commodities of the earth, yet at last they must (in spight of their beards) end where they begun; end with nothing, as they begun with nothing: end with a winding sheet, as they begun with swadling clouts. For what is become of the greatest Monarches, Kings, Princes, Potentates and Magnificoes that ever the World had? where is Cyrus, Darius, Zerxes, Alexander, Cæsar, Pompey, Scipio and Hannibal? where are the Valiant Henries, and Noble Edwards of England? Are they not all gone down to the house of oblivion? Are they not all returned to their dust, and their thoughts perish? Though they were as Gods, yet have they dyed as men, and are fallen like others.

Who now careth for them? who talketh

eth of them, who feareth them? who regardeth them? do not beggers tread upon them? Yet while they lived, they were the Lords of the world; they were as terrible as Lyons, fearful to all men, full of Pomp and Glory, Dignity and Majesty. They plowed up all things, they bare all before them, and who but they? But now they have given up the Ghost, and are (as Job saith) gone down to the House appointed for all the living. Their pomp is descended with them, and all their glory is buryed in the ashes. They are now covered under a clod, cast out into a Vault, made companions to toads, & the worms do eat them: and what is become of their souls, is most of all to be feared. Job 30. 23.

Thus we see how all flesh doth but make a Vain shew for a while upon this Theatre of misery, fetcheth a compasse about, and is presently gone. Yea, as the Poet saith, *Servius aut citius sedem properamus ad unam*, first or last we must all to the grave.

Asm. You have made a very good speech, it doth me good to hear it. I wonder all these things considered, that men should be so wholly given to this world, as they are. I think the Devil hath bewitched them; for they shall carry nothing with them when they die, but their good deeds and their ill.

Theol. The drudges and trudges of this world, may very fitly be compared to a Kings Sumpter-horse, which goeth laden all the day long with as much Gold and Treasure as he can bear, but at night

his treasure is taken from him; he is turned into a sorry dirty stable, and hath nothing left him but his galled back: Even so the rich Cormorants and Caterpillars of the earth, which here have treasured and hoarded up great heaps of gold and silver, (with the which they travel loaden thorow this World) shall in the end be stript out of all, let down into their grave, and have nothing left them, but their galled consciences, with the which they shall be tumbled down into the dungeon of eternal darkness.

Phil. Wherein doth the sting and strength of this world especially consist?

Theol. Even as the great strength of Sampson lay in his hair, so the great strength of the World lyeth in her two breasts, the one of pleasure, the other of profit. For she, like a notable Strumpet, by laying out of these her breasts, doth bewitch the Sons of men, and allureth thousands to her lust. For if she cannot win them with the one breast, yet she gaineth them with the other; if not with pleasure, then with profit; if not with profit, then with pleasure: He is an odd man of a thousand that sucketh not of the one breast or the other. But sure it is, which soever he sucketh, he shall be poysoned: for she giveth none other milk but rank poyson. The world therefore is like to an alluring Jael, which sitteth at her door to entice us to come in, and eat of the milk of her pleasures: but when she hath once got us in, she is ready (even

Jud. 4. 21.

while

while we are eating) with her hammer and her nail, to pierce thorow our brains.

Phil. I see plainly, this world is a very strumpet, a strong bait, and a snaring net, wherein thousands are taken. It is very bird-lime, which doth so belime our affections, that they cannot ascend upward. It is like the weights of a clock, hang'd upon our soul, which draw them down to the earth; it naileth us fast down to the ground: it mortereth us into clay: it maketh us abominable unto God. For I remember God made a law, That whosoever goeth with his breast upon the ground, should be abominable unto us. How much more these carnal worldlings, which are fast sodred to the earth? Lev. 11.

Theol. **The Apostle Saint James, seeing into the deep wickedness of this world, and knowing right-well how odious it maketh us in the sight of God, cryeth out against it, terming it Adultery, and all worldlings, adulterers, because they forsake Christ their true Husband, and whorishly give their hearts to this World.** O ye Adulterers, and Adulteresses, saith he, know ye not that the amity of this world is the enmity of God? Whosoever therefore will be made a friend to this world, makes himself the enemy of God. **And who dare stand forth and say, I will be the enemy of God? Who therefore dares be a worldling: for every worldling is the enemy of God: what then will become of you, O ye wicked worldlings?** Jam. 4.

Phil. It appeareth then plainly by the Scriptures, that the excessive love of this

world, and unsatiable desire of having, is a most dangerous thing, and men do they know not what in seeking so greedily after it

Theol. The Heathen man will rise up in judgement against us; for he saith, Unsatiablenesse is the foulest evil amongst mortal men. But many of our Sea-gulfs and Whirl-pools make no conscience of it. They think it is no sin, they devour and swallow up all, and yet are never satisfied: they will have all, and more then all, and the Devil and all. The whole world cannot satisfie their minde, but God must create new worlds to content them. These men are sick of the golden dropsie; the more they have, the more they desire. The love of money increaseth, as money it self increaseth. But the Scripture saith, He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver. Oh therefore that we would strive earnestly to get out of this gulf of hell, and tread the Moon (that is, all worldly things) under our feet, as it is spoken of the Church: and that we would set our affections on the things that are above, and not on the things that are beneath: that we would flit an high pitch, and soare aloft as the Eagles, looking down at this world, & all things in it, as at our feet; contemning it, and treading the very glory of it under our feet, that it may never have more power over us.

Soph.

Eccles. 5. 10.

Apoc. 12. 1.

Phil. O happy, and twice happy are they that can do so! and I beseech the Almighty God to give us this holy Spirit, whereby

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we may be carried above this world, into the Mountains of Spices. For, how happy a thing is it to have our converſation in Heaven! that is, to have an inward converſation with God, by much prayer, reading, meditation, and heavenly affections. This indeed is to climbe up above the world, and to converſe in the chambers of peace. O therefore that we would ſeriouſly and throughly conceive and conſider of this world as it is! that we would well weigh the vanity of it, and the excellency of that which is to come; that ſo we might loathe the one, and love the other; deſpiſe the one, and imbrace the other; love God more then ever wee did, and this world leſs! For what is this world but vanity of vanities?

Anti. You do ſo exceedingly abaſe that which ſome make their God. You ſpeak contemptuouſly of that which moſt men have in greateſt price and admiration. You diſgrace that which multitudes would Grace. You make light of that which numbers make greateſt account of. Let us therefore hear your Reaſons. Shew us more fully what it is; deſcribe it unto us.

Theol. **The world is a ſea of giaſts, a pageant of fond delights, a theatre of vanity, a labyrinth of errour, a gulf of grief, a ſtye of filthineſſe, a vale of miſery, a ſpectacle of woe, a river of tears, a ſtage of deceit, a cage full of owls, a den of Scorpions, a wilderneſs of Wolves, a Cabin of Bears, a whirl-winde of paſſions, a feigned Comedy, a deteſtable phrenſie, where is falſe delight, aſſured**

griefe,

griefe, certain sorrow, uncertain pleasure, lasting woe, fickle worth, long heavinesse, short joy.

Phil. Now you have indeed described it to the full, and laid it out (as it were) in orient colours. And a man would think hee were bewitched or starke mad, which hereafter should set his mind on it. But yet I am desirous to hear a little more of that which I asked you before: wherein the strength and poyson of the world doth especially consist?

Theol. In this lyeth a great strength of the world, that it draweth down the stars of heaven, and maketh them fall to the earth, as it is said of the Dragons tail; which is ambition, covetousnesse,
Rev. 12. and the love of this world. For we may wonder and lament, to see how the love of these things hath wounded and overborn many excellent servants of God, both Preachers and Professours of the Gospel: which thing doth plainly argue the strength of it, for it is the strongest, and the very last engine that Satan useth to impugne us withal, when none other will prevail: For when no temptation could fasten upon Christ, he bringeth forth this last weapon which never
Mar. 4. faileth, All these things will I give thee; shewing him the glory of the whol world. So then he (having experience in this, that it never faileth) thought to have overcome Christ himself with it. Here therefore lyeth the very sting and strength of the world and the Devil: for whom hath he not taken with, All these things,

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will I give thee? whom hath he not wounded? whom hath he not deceived? whom hath he not overthrown? with this he enticed Balaam: with this he beguiled Achan: with this he overthrew Judas: with this he bewitched Demas: with this in these our dayes he deceiveth many of excellent gifts. For allursdy he is a Phœnix amongst men, which is not overcome with this. He is a wonderment of the World that is not moved with money.

Phil. I am now fully satisfied for this matter. But one thing cometh often into my mind; to wit, that these miserable worldlings can have no sound comfort in their pleasures and profits, because they have no comfort in God, nor peace in their own consciences.

Theol. You say very true. It is impossible that men loving this World, should have any sound comfort in God: For no man can serve two Masters; both God and riches. Their case therefore is very dangerous and fearful, though they never see it nor feel it; as I will shew you by a plain example. Put case one of these great rich Worldlings should be cloathed in Velvet, and cloath of Gold, in most stately manner, and also should be set at his table, furnished with all the dainties of the world, should be attended and waited upon by many in most lordly & pompous manner, should sit in his goodly dining chamber, all glittering like Gold: should have his first, second and third service served in with minstrels and instruments,

ments of Musick in most Royal sort, he sitting in his chair like a King in his throne; yet for all this, if a dagger should be held to his heart all this while, ready to stab him, what pleasure, what joy, what comfort could thee have in all the rest? Even so whatsoever pomp and pleasures wicked worldlings have here below, yet their guilty and hellish conscience is as it were a dagger held alwaies hard to their heart, so as they can have no found comfort in any thing. Or let me give it you thus: What case a man hath committed high treason, & were therefore apprehended, arraign'd, & condemn'd to be hanged, drawn and quartered; what then can comfort a man in this case? can mirth, can musick, can gold, can silver, can lands, can livings? No, no, none of all these can help him, or give him any comfort: For the continual thoughts of death do so gripe him at the heart, that none of all these can do him any good, or any whit mittigate his grief. What then is the thing that can comfort him in this case? Onely a pardon sealed with the Kings broad Seal, and subscribed with his own hand. For as soon as he hath got this, his heavy heart revives, and leapeth for joy. This then assuredly is the very case of all prophane Atheists and worldlings, who are not assured of the King of heaven his pardon for their sinn: and then, what joy can they have either in their meat, drink, goods, cattel, wives, children, lands, revenues, or any thing

thing whatsoever? For the dreadful thoughts of hel do oftentimes cross them inwardly, and quite damp and daſh all their mirth, their own consciences will not be stilled, but in most terrible manner rise up and give evidence against them, telling them flatly they shall be damned, how merry and jocond soever they seem to be in this world, setting a good face on the matter. For sure it is, that inwardly they have many a cold pull, and many heart-gripes. And all their mirth and jollity is but a giggling from the teeth outward, they can have no sound comfort within. And therefore the wise King saith, Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heavineſſe. Pro. 14. 13.

The wise saith the holy man Job, Terrours of conſcience come upon the wicked man like waters: in the night a Whirl-wind carrieth him away secretly. Job 27. 20.

Eliphas the Temanite abouncheth the same point, saying, The wicked man is continually as one that travelleth with childe: a sound of fear is in his ears, &c. Job 15. 20.

Thus then we see, that howsoever many carnal Atheists, and ungodly persons seem outwardly to goe aloft in all mirth and jollity, bearing it out (as we say) at the breast: yet inwardly are they pinched with terrours, and most horrible convulsions of conſcience.

Antil. You have spoken many things very sharply against covetousneſs; but in my minde, so long as a man covets nothing but his own, he cannot be said to be covetous.

Theol.

Theol. Yes that he may. For not onely is he covetous, which greedily desireth other mens goods; but even he also which over-niggardly and pinchingly holdeth fast his own, and is such a miser, that he will part with nothing. We see the world is full of such pinch-pennies, that will let nothing go, except it be wrung from them perforce, as a key out of Hercules's hand.

The gripple muck-rakers have as leave part with their blood as their goods. They will pinch their own backs and bellies, to get their God into their chests, And when they have once got him there, will they easily part with him, trow ye? No, no: a man will part with his God for no mans pleasure. He will eat pease-bread, and drink small drink, rather then he will diminish his God. Therefore the Scripture saith, Eat not the meat of him that hath an evil eye, and desire not his dainty dishes. For as he grudgeth his own soul, so will he say unto thee, Eat and Drink, when his heart is not with thee. Thou shalt vomit thy morsels which thou hast eaten, and lose thy pleasant speeches. The old saying is, The covetous man wanteth as well that which he hath, as that which he hath not; because he hath no use of that which he hath. So then you see, there is a great strength of covetousness in the niggardly keeping of our own.

Prov. 23. 6.

Anti. Yet for all this, men must follow their worldly business, and lay up to live. For it is an hard world, & goods are not easie

to

to come by. Therefore men must ply their business, or else they may go beg and starve.

Theol. I deny not, but that you may follow the works of your calling diligently, so it be in the fear of God, and with a good conscience, as I told you before: but this greedinesse, and grippingnesse God doth condemn, and also this excessive love of money.

Anti. Believe mee, I know no body that hates it; I cannot see but that all men love gold and silver.

Theol. It is one thing to use these things, and another thing to love them, and set our hearts upon them. For the Scripture saith, If riches encrease, set not your hearts upon them. Saint John also saith, Love not this world, nor the things that are in this world. He saith not, Use not this world; but, Love not this world: for use it we may; love it we may not. Therefore the Apostle saith, that, They which use this world, should be as though they used it not. 1 John 2. 1 Cor. 7. where he alloweth a sober and moderate use of the things of this life in the fear of God. We must use this world for necessities sake, as we use meat and drink; taking no more of this world then needs must, for fear of forfeiting. The Holy Ghost saith, Let your conversation be without covetousnesse, and bee content with things present. Happy is that man therefore that is well content with his present estate whatsoever, and carrieth himself moderately and comfortably therein. For the SPIRIT saith, Heb. 13. 5.

There

Eccles. 2.24. There is no profit to a man under the Sun, but that he eat, drink, and delight his soul with the profit of his labours. I saw also this, that this is the hand of God. **In which words the prudent King saith thus much in effect: That this is all the good we can attain unto in this world, even to take a sober and comfortable use of the things of this life which God bestoweth upon us. And further he chaucheth,** That thus to use them aright, and with a sound comfort, is a very rare gift of God. **For,** as Greg. Nazia. **one saith,** Hee is a wise man, that is not grieved for the things which hee hath not; but doth rejoyce in the things which he hath, using them to Gods glory and his own comfort. **So then I conclude this point, and return to you an answer, thus: That we may in sober and Godly manner, use gold, silver, and the things of this life: but at no hand to over-love them, or give our hearts unto them.**

Eccles. 5.18,19

Antil. Well; yet for all this I cannot see but that these Preachers and Professors, these learned men and precise fellows, are even as eager of the world, and as covetous as any other.

Theol. **Now you shew your venemous spirit against better men then your self. But I have a four-fold answer for you. First, I answer,** that although godly men may be somewhat over-taken this way, and over-spirit a little, yet they breath not out so grossly as others. **Secondly,** if God leave them sometimes to be overcome of the world; yet he, in his great

great wisdome and mercy, turneth it to their good. For thereby he first humbleth them, and afterwards raiseth them up again. And so all things work together for good to them that love God. Thirdly, I answer, we must live by rules and not by examples. For even the best of Gods people have had their wants and weaknesses. Therefore wee may not frame rules to live by out of the infirmities of the most excellent Servants of God. Wicked therefore and impious is their allegation, who alledge Davids adultery. Lot's drunkennesse, Peters fall, Abraham's slips, Salomons weaknes, &c. for a shelter, and defence of themselves in like sins. Lastly, I answer, that you greatly wound your self in your own speech; so far off are you from mending your market any whit thereby. For if Preachers and other Godly men (after many prayers, teares, and much means used) cannot escape scot-free, but sometimes are wounded, and almost overthrown by the world and the Devil; what then shall become of you, which use no means at all, nor any gain-striving, but willingly give place to the devil? If the devil did ouer-master David, Lot, Sampson, Salomon, and other such excellent worthies; alas! what shall become of meer Worldlings and Atheists? If the most valiant men, and chief Captains in a battel go down, what shall become of the faint-hearted Souldiers? And as St. Peter saith, If the righteous scarce be saved, where shall the wicked

Rom. 8.

1 Pet. 4. 18.

wicked and ungodly appear? **Do then I take you at the rebound, and return your own weapon upon your self; that sith godly men cannot escape through this world without blows; what shall become of them that know not what godlinesse meaneth?**

Anti. Yet I say once again that men must live, men must lay up for this world: we cannot live by the Scripture. And as for that which you call covetousnesse, it is but good husbandrie.

Theol. **I thought we should have it at last. Now you have paid it home: you are come to the old byas, and as a hare to her old form, and her old covert. For this is the very covert and thicket of the world wherein they would hide covetousnesse: but I will do what I can to hunt you out of it by the Scriptures.**

Prov. 11. 24. **First** Salomon saith; Hee that spareth more then is right shall surely come to poverty. **So then you see, that covetousnesse bringeth forth poverty. Thus therefore I reason: That which bringeth poverty is no good husbandry: but covetousnesse and too much sparing bringeth poverty; therefore it is no good husbandry. The same** Salomon saith, He that is given to gain, troubleth his own house. **That is, the covetous man is an occasion of many evils in his Estate and Family. From Scripture I do thus reason: That which troubleth a mans house, is no good husbandry; but covetousnes troubleth a mans house; therefore it is no good husbandry.**

Last

Last of all the old Proverb saith, Covetousnes bringeth nothing home: **and therefore it is no good husbandry. For oftentimes we see, that men for Covetousnesse of more, lose that which otherwise they might have had. One of the wise Heathen saith,** Evil gain is as bad as loss. **But the Covetous man doth seek after wicked gain, and therefore seeketh loss; and consequently is no good Husband. Another saith,** Unjust gain bringeth forth loss and misery. **And therefore it is farre enough off from Vertue, and all good Husbandry. Thus then I hope you are so hunted both by God and men, that this covert cannot hide you. And therefore you must out of it, and seek some other shelter: for this will not serve your turn.** Hesiodus. Phocilides.

Phil. Now I must needs say you have fully stopt his mouth, and throughly ferreted him out of his deep burrow. And it is most certain that you say, that the wise Heathen hath condemned covetousnesse and all unjust gains; which we both practise and defend: and therefore shall they rise up in judgement against us. But now let us leave this caviller, and proceed in our matters. There is one thing yet remaining, wherein I desire to be satisfied.

Theol. **What is that?**

Phil. I would gladly know which be the special remedies against covetousnes.

Theol. **There be two special remedies against covetousnesse: to wit, contentation, & the meditation of Gods Providence.**

Phil. Let us hear somewhat of contentation out of the Scriptures. Theol.

1 Tim. 6 8. Theol. **The Apostle saith,** Having food and raiment, we must be therewith content. For wee brought nothing into this world: and it is certain we shall carry nothing out. Heb. 13. 5. **The Spirit also saith,** Let your conversation be without covetousnes, and be content with your present state. Phil. 4. 11. **Again, the Apostle saith,** Hee had learned in what estate soever he was, therewith to be content. **Note, that he saith, he had learned; for he had it not of himself. For contentation is the singular gift of God: as it is written,** Prov. 13. 25. The righteous eateth to the contentation of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want. Cyril. in Joan. 12. **An ancient Father saith,** We ought to accustome our selves to live of a little, and to be content, that wee may do no wicked or filthy thing for lucres sake. Chrys. hom. 51. **Another saith,** Hee is not poor that hath nothing, but he that desires much. Neither is he rich that hath much, but hee that wanteth nothing: for contentation never wanteth. There is no grief in lacking, but where there is immoderate desire of having. If we will live after Nature, we shall never bee poor: if after our own appetite, we shall never be rich. Eurip. **Well therefore said the Poet,** VVax not rich unjustly, but justly: Be content with thine own things, abstain from other mens. **Thus then we see, that both God himself (the fountain of all wisdome) and men also, both in the state of nature and grace, do all joyntly advise us to strive for contentation; and then we shall have a soveraign remedy against Covetousnesse.**

Phil.

Phil. Let us hear somewhat of the second remedy against covetousness.

Theol. **In earnest thinking upon the Providence of God is a present remedy against the most foolish and pining carefulnesse of men for this life. For if we would seriously weigh, and deeply consider the provident care that God hath had for his children in all ages, touching food and rayment, and how strangely he hath provided for them; it might suffice to correct this evil in us, and minister unto us a notable preservative against Covetousnesse.**

We read how wonderfully the Lord did provide for his Prophet Elijah in the time of the great dearth and drought that was in Israel. Did not the Lord command the Ravens to feed him by the River Cherith? Did not the Ravens bring him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening, and he drank of the River? 1 Kings 17.

What should I speak, how miraculously God provided for Hagar and her Infant, when they were both cast out of Abrahams house, & brought to great extremity; even both of them ready to give up the Ghost for want of food. Gen. 21.19.

Did not God help at a pinch, as his manner hath always been? Did he not send his Angel unto them, and both comfort them, and provide for them? What should I speak how strangely God provided for his Church in the wilderness? Did he not feed them with Manna from heaven, Exod. 15.5. Exod. 17.6.

Psa. 78. Heaven, and gave them Water to drink out of a Rock? hath not our heavenly Father made many royal and large promises, that he will provide necessaries for his children? Shall we not think that he will be as good as his word? doth he not say, The Lyons lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek him shall want nothing that is good? Doth he not say, Fear him all ye his Saints, for nothing is wanting to them that fear him? Doth he not say, No good thing shal be with-held from them that walk uprightly? Doth he not say, Our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of these things, and that all these things shall be cast upon us, if wee earnestly seek his kingdome? Did he not bid us, Cast all our care upon him, for he careth for us? Doth he not bid us, Take no thought what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or wherewith we shall be cloathed? Meaning thereby no distracting or distrustful thoughts. Doth he not say, He will not leave us, nor forsake us? Doth he not say, The Lord is at hand, in nothing be careful? Are not these large promises sufficient to stay up our faith in Gods providence? Shall we think God feeleth with us? Shall we think hee meaneth no such matter? Shall we imagine hee will not keep touch? Oh, it were blasphemy once to think it. For God is true, and all men lyers; Hee is faithful that hath promised. His word is more then the faith of a Prince; more then ten thousand Obligations. Why then do we not rest upon it? why go we

Psal. 34. 10

Psal. 84. 11.

Mat. 6. 33.

1 Pet. 5. 7.

Luke 12.

Heb. 13. 5

Phil. 4. 5.

any

any further? Why do we not take his word? why do we not depend wholly upon him? Why are we still covetous? why are we still distrustful? why do we dissemble and deceive? Oh we of little faith! Our Lord Jesus knowing right well the distrustfulness of our nature, and the deep root it hath in us, is not onely content to make these great and royal promises unto us, which were enough, but also strengtheneth and backeth us with many strong Reasons to support our weakness in this behalf. He therefore bringeth us back to a due consideration of things. Consider (saith he) the Ravens; consider the fowls of the Heavens: Luk. 12. for they neither sow nor reap, nor carry into barns, and yet God feedeth them; they want nothing. Consider the Lillies how they grow, they neither labour nor spin; yet *Salomon* in all his royalty was not cloathed like one of these. Oh therefore that we would consider these Considers! Oh that we would consider, that our life is more worth then meat, and our bodies then rayment! Oh that we would consider, that with all our carking and caring we can do no good at all, no not so much as add one cubit to our stature! Truly, truly, if we would deeply ponder these Reasons, of our Saviour, and apply them to our selves, they might serve for a bulwark and sure defence against covetousnesse. If men would consider how that great King of Heaven (who hath his way in the whirl-winde, and the clouds are the dust of his feet) Nah. 1. 3

careth for the little Wren and silly Sparrow, how he looketh to them, how he tendereth them, how he provideth for them every day, both breakfast, dinner, and supper: it might serve to correct our distrustfulnes. For who ever saw these, or any other fowl, starve for hunger? so good a Father, and so good a Nurse have they. And are not we much better then they? Hath not God more care of us, then of them? Yes verily, a thousand times. For he loveth them but for our sakes: how much more then doth he love our selves? Therefore I say again and again, If we would consider these things, and lay them to heart, they would nip covetousnes on the head, and drive it quite out of our hearts. Let us consider therefore, that God provided for man before man was: then how much more will he provide for man now that he is? Is he our Father, and will he not provide for us? Is he our King, and will not he regard us? Is he our Shepherd, and will he not look to us? Hath he provided heaven for us, and will he not give us earth? Hath he given us his Son Christ, and shall he not with him give us all things? Doth he provide for his enemies, and will he not provide for his friends? Doth he provide for whore-mongers, and will he neglect his chosen? Doth he send his rain, and cause the Sun to shine upon the unjust, & shall he not upon the Just? Doth he provide for them which are not of the family, and will he not provide for his own family?

will a man feed his hoggs and not care for his servants? Or will he care for his servants, and not regard his own children? Oh, then let us consider these Reasons: let us remember, that our Heavenly Father hath as great care for the preservation of his creatures, as once he had for their creation. Let us therefore remember, that he which giveth the day, will provide for us the things of the day. Let us remember, that God always giveth for sustentation, though not for satiety. Let us remember, that God will not famish the souls of the righteous. Let us remember how God never faileth his. For whoever trusted in the Lord, and was confounded? Prov. 10. 3.

Phil. What then is the cause that many do want these outward streams?

Theol. The cause is in themselves, because they want faith. For if we had faith, we could want nothing. For Faith feareth no Famine, as saith an ancient Father. Another saith, Forasmuch as all things are Gods, he that hath God can want nothing, if himself be not wanting unto God. Therefore to have God is to have all things; for if we have him our friend, we have enough, we need go no further. For he will make men our friends, yea, he will make Angels, & all Creatures to be serviceable unto us, he will give them special charge to look to us, to guard us, and to do continual homage unto us. Therefore let us make God our friend, and then have we done all at once, that may concern our *Hieron. ad Heliodorum. Cypr. in oratione Dominica.*

good, both for this life and a better. But if he stand not our friend, if we have not him on our side, if he back us not, then all other things whatsoever can do us no good, all is not worth a button: For, *Quid prodest si omnia habes, cum tamen qui omnia dedit non habeas?* What is a man the better, though he have all things, and be without him which is the author of all things?

August.

Phil. Herein you speak very truely, no doubt. For we see many have great plenty of outward things: but because they have not God, they can have no true comfort in them, or blessing with them

Theol. True indeed: For, Man liveth not by bread onely, (saith our Lord Jesus) but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. And again he saith, Though a man have abundance, yet his life consisteth not in the things that hee hath. For without Gods blessing, there can be no found comfort in any thing. We see by daily experience how the Lord curseth the wicked, though they have abundance. For some having abundance, yet are visited with continual sicknesses. Some having abundance, pine away with consumptions. Others having abundance, dye of surfeiting. Others are snatched away by untimely death, in the midst of all their jollity. Others are visited with great losse both by Sea and by Land. Others are vexed with curst Wives, and disobedient children. Some again commit murthers and treasons, and so lose all at once. Others are wasted and consumed

Mat. 4.

Luk. 12.

lamed by the secret curse of God, no man knoweth how. Some having great riches, are given over to the murtherers, some to the thief, some to the poysoner. Therefore the wise King saith, There is a sore evil, which I have seen under the Sun, namely riches, kept for the owners thereof to their hurt, Eccles. 5. 13.

Zophar also the Naamathite, saith. When the wicked shall have sufficient and enough, he shall be brought into straits. The hand of every troublesome man shall bee upon him. When he shall fill his belly, God will send upon him his fierce wrath, which he shall rain upon him in stead of his meat. Job 20. 22, 23.

Thus then it is clear, that mans life and good estate dependeth not upon the abundance of outward things, but onely upon the blessing and providence of God For, his blessing onely maketh rich, and it doth bring no sorrow with it. For, Better is a little to the just, then great abundance to many of the wicked. Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, then great treasure, and trouble therewith. Better is a little with righteousnes, then great revenues without equity. Pro. 10. 22. Psa. 37. 16. Pro. 15. 16. Pro. 16. 8.

Thus then I conclude this point: Man liveth not by bread, but by a blessing on bread; not by outward means, but by a blessing upon means. For how can bread, being a dead thing, and having no life in it self, give life to others?

Phil. I do not well understand the meaning of these words. By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Theol. Thereby is meant the decree, ordinance and providence of God, which upholdeth all things, even the whole order of Nature.

For the Scripture saith, Hee spake, and it was done; he commanded, and they were created. In which words we plainly see, that God doth but speak, and it is done; he doth command, and all creatures are preserved. For God doth all things with a word. He created all with his word, he preserveth all with his word, he speaketh, and it is done. His words are words of power and authority. Whatsoever hee saith, whatsoever he calleth for, it must be done presently, without any delay: there is no withstanding of him. Hee calleth for famine, and behold famine. He calleth for plenty, and behold plenty. Hee calleth for pestilence, and behold pestilence. Hee calleth for the sword, and behold the sword. All Angels, all men, all beasts, all fishes, all fowls, all creatures, whatsoever must obey him, and be at his beck. He is the greatest commander: his word commandeth Heaven, and earth, and the Sea. All creatures must be obedient to his will, and subject to his Ordinance.

Psa. 33. 9.

This is the cause why all things, both in Heaven, Earth, and the Sea, do keep their immutable and unvariable courses, times and seasons, even because he hath charged them so to do. And they must of necessity always, at all times, and for ever obey: for the creatures must obey the Creator. This Act of Parliament was

made

made the first work of the world, and neuer since was or can be repealed.

Phil. But to call you back again to the point we had in hand: Resolve mee, I pray you, of this; whether many of the dear children of God do not, in this life, sometimes want outward things, and are brought into great distresse.

Theol. **Yes certainly.** For Elijah **did want, and was in distresse.** Paul **did want, and was in many distresses.** **The Holy Christians mentioned in the** Hebrews **did want, and were in marvellous distresses.** **Many of Gods dear ones have in all ages wanted, and at this day also do want, and are greatly distressed.** **But this is a most infallible truth, that howsoever Gods children may want, and bee low brought, yet they are never utterly forsaken, but are holpen even in greatest extremities: yea, when all things are desperate, and brought even to the last cast.**

1 King. 17. 2 Cor. 1. 8. 2 Cor. 11. 25. Heb. 11. 36.

To this point most notably speaketh The Apostle, saying, We are afflicted on every side, but yet we despair not: wee are persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but wee perish not. **The Prophet** Jeremiah **also saith,** The Lord will not forsake for ever: but though hee send affliction, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies: For hee doth not punish willingly, nor from his heart, nor afflict the children of men. **The Kingly Prophet saith,** Surely the Lord will not fail his people, neither will hee forsake his inheritance. **The Lord himself saith,** For a

2 Cor. 4. 8. Lam. 3. Psalm 94. 14.

Isa. 55. 8. moment in mine anger I hid my face from thee; but with everlasting mercy have I had compassion on thee. So then we may fully assure our selves, and even write of it (as a most undoubted and sealed truth) that Gods children shall never be utterly forsaken in their troubles.

Phil. Sith the care and providence of God is so great for his children as you have largely declared: what then, I pray you, is the cause why God suffereth his to be brought into so many troubles and necessities?

Theol. Their profit and benefit is the cause, and not their hurt. For he loveth them, when he smiteth them. He favoureth them, when he seemeth to be most against them. He aimeth at their good, when he seemeth to be most angry with them. He woundeth them, that he may heal them. He presseth them that he may ease them. He maketh them cry, that afterward they may laugh. He always meaneth well unto them, he never meaneth hurt. He is most constant in his love towards them. If he bring them into necessities, it is but for the tryal of their faith, love, patience and diligence in prayer.

If he cast them into the fire, it is not to consume them; but to purge and refine them. If he bring them into great dangers it is but to make them call upon him more earnestly for help and deliverance.

He presseth us, that we might cry: we cry, that we may be heard: we are heard, that we might be delivered. So that here is no hurt done: we are wont scarred then hurt.

Even

Even as the Mother, when her child is way-ward, threatneth to throw it to the Wolf, or scareth it with some poker, or bulbegger, to make it cling more unto her, and be quiet: So the Lord oftentimes sheweth us the terrible faces of troubles and dangers, to make us cleave and cling faster unto him, and also teach us to esteem better of his gifts, when we enjoy them, and to be more thankful for them; as health, wealth, peace, liberty, safety, &c. So then still we see, here is nothing meant on Gods part but good: as it is written, All things work together for good, to them that love God. For, even the afflictions of Gods children are so sanctified unto them by the Spirit, that thereby they are made partakers of the holiness of God: thereby they enjoy the quiet fruit of righteousness: thereby they attain unto a greater measure of joy in the Holy Ghost: thereby the world is crucified to them; and they to the world: thereby they are made conformable to the death of Christ: thereby they are kept from the condemnation of the World: thereby they learn experience, patience, hope, &c So that all things considered, Gods children are no losers by their afflictions, but gainers. It is better for them to have them, then to be without them: they are very good for them. For when Gods children are chastised, it is as it should be. For to them the crosse is mercy, and loss is gain. Afflictions are their schooling, and their adversity their best University.

Rom. 8. Heb. 12. 10. Heb. 12. 14. 1 Thes. 5. 6. Gal. 6. 14. Phil. 3. 10. 2 Cor. 11. 32. Rom 5. 3, 4.

Psalm 119.

It is good for me (saith the holy man of God) that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes. By his afflictions therefore he learned much, and became a good Scholar in Gods Book, and well seen in his Statutes and Laws. He grew to great wisdome and judgement by his chastisements. All things turned about in Gods merciful Providence, to his everlasting comfort. For I say again and again, That all things tend to the good of Gods chosen people. And therefore that estate which God will have his children to be in, is always best for them: because he who can best discern what is best; seeth it to be best for them; whether it be sickness or health, poverty or plenty, prison or liberty, prosperity or adversity. For sometimes sickness is better for us then health, and poverty then plenty. Are therefore the Children of God sick? It is best for them. Are they poor? It is best for them. Are they in any trouble? It is best for them; because their good Father will turn it to the best. He will oftentimes cut us short of our lusts and desires, because he seeth we will hane our selves with them, he in fatherly care will take the knife from us, because he seeth we will hurt our selves with it. He will keep us short of health and wealth, because he knoweth we will be the worse for them. He will not give us too much ease and prosperity in this world; for he knoweth it will poyson us. He will not allow us continual rest, like standing

ponds; for then he knoweth we shall gather scum & filth. He dealeth fatherly and mercifully with us in all things; even then seeking our greatest good, when we think he doth us most harme.

And to speak all in a word: he bringeth us into troubles and straits to this end especially, that he may hear of us. For he right well knoweth our nature, he is well acquainted with our disposition; he knoweth we will not come at him, but when we stand in need of him; we care not for him so long as all goeth well with us. But if we come into distresse, or want any thing that we fain would have, then he is sure to hear of us, as he saith by the Prophet, In their affliction they will seek me early. Hos. 5. 15.

And another Prophet saith, Lord, in trouble have they visited thee: they poured out a Prayer when thy chastisement was upon them. Isa. 26. 16.

So then now, I hope you do plainly see the cause why the Lord bringeth his children into so many troubles and necessities.

Phil. I do see it indeed, and am very well satisfied in it. But yet let me ask you one thing further: Are Gods children alwayes sure to be delivered out of their troubles?

Theol. Yes verily: and (out of doubt) so far forth as God seeth good for them: For it is written, Great are the troubles of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. Psalm 4 19.

Saint Peter saith, The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation. 2 Pet. 2. 9.

As if he should say, He

He is well beaten to it, and well seen and experienced in it, so as he can do it easily and without any trouble at all. It is said of Joseph being in prison, That when his
Ps. 105. 19, 20. appointed time was come, and the counsel of the Lord had tried him, the King sent and loosed him, the Ruler of the people delivered him. And again the Scriptures saith,
Psa. 34. 17. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. And in another place, the Lord himself saith, concerning the righteous
Psa. 91. 17. man. Because he hath loved me, therefore I will deliver him. I will exalt him, because he hath known my Name. He shall call upon me in trouble, and I will hear him. I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and glorifie him. So also saith Eliphaz the
Job. 5. Temanite, He shall deliver thee in six troubles, and in the seventh the evil shall not
Isa. 26. 20. touch thee. Come, my people, saith the Lord, Enter thou into my Chambers, and shut the doors after thee: hide thy self for a very little while, until the indignation pass over. And the Prophet saith, Upon
Obad. 17. Mount Zion shall bee deliverance, and it shall be holy: and the house of *Jacob* shall possess their hereditary Possessions. Almost innumerable places of the Scriptures might be alledged to this purpose; but these may suffice. Therefore let us know for a certainty, that so sure as troubles and afflictions are to the children of God, so sure also is deliverance

out

out of the same. As we may write of the one, and make reckoning of it, as sure as the coat on our back; so may we also in Gods good time, write of the other, and make full account of it, as sure as the Lord is true. Abraham was in trouble but delivered. Job in trouble, but delivered. David in great trouble, but delivered. The three children in the furnace, but delivered. Daniel in the Lyons den, but delivered. Jonas in the Whales belly, but delivered. Paul in innumerable troubles, but yet delivered out of all.

Poil. All this being true that you say, it followeth, that Gods children are chastised onely for thier good, and ever more sure of deliverance in his appointed time. Which thing being so, me thinks there is no cause at all why they should be over-heavy, or too much cast down in their afflictions.

Theol. Assuredly there is no cause at all, but rather cause why they should rejoyce, clap their hands and sing Care away. For can a father forsake his Children? a King his subjects? a Master his servant, or a Shepherd his sheep? Doth not Jehovah say, I will not leave thee nor forsake thee? Doth not our Heavenly Father know we have need of these things? Hath not God given us his word, that we shall not want our ward things? Hath he not said, they shall be cast upon us? Why then should we be dismayed? Why should wee hang down our heads? Why do wee not pluck up good hearts, and be of good cheer? God is our dear Father; Heb. 13.

hee

he is our best friend; he is our daily Benefactor; he keepeth us at his own cost and charges, he grudgeth us nothing, he thinketh nothing too much for us; he loveth us most dearly; he is most chary and tender over us; he cannot endure the wind should blow upon us; he will have us want nothing that is good for us. If we will eat gold we shall have it. He hath given us his faithful promise, that as long as we live, we shall never want. Let us therefore rejoyce and be merry. For heaven is ours, earth is ours, God is ours, Christ is ours, all is ours; as the Apostle saith, All is yours, and you are Christs, and Christ is Gods. The world clap their hands, and crow long before it be day, saying, All is theirs, but the children of God may say, and say truly, All is ours. For they have a true title and proper interest through Christ, in all the Creatures. Many are their priviledges, great are their prerogatives; they are free of heaven, and free of earth. They are the onely free Denizons of the world: Christ hath purchased them their freedom: Christ hath made them free, & therefore they are free indeed. They are free from sin, free from hell, free from damnation. They are at peace with God, Men and Angels: they are at peace with themselves: They are at peace with all creatures: they are young Princes, Angels fellows, descended of the highest house, of the blood Royal of Heaven, States of Paradice, and heirs apparent

1. Cor. 3. 22.

to

to the immortal Crown. Therefore God hath commanded his Angels to guard them, being such young Princes as they are: yea, he hath given a very straight charge to all his Creatures, to look to them, to see to them that they want nothing, that they take no hurt: so jealous, so chary, so tender, is he of them. The Angels must comfort Jacob: the Whale must rescue Jonas: the Raven must feed Elias: the Sun and Moon must stay for Joshua: the Sea must divide it self, that Moses and his people may pass thorow: the fire must not burn the three children: the Lyons may not devour Daniel: All the creatures must change their nature, rather then Gods children should not be holpen and delivered. Oh therefore how great is the happiness of Gods chosen! Who can expresse it? Who can utter it? they know not their own happiness: it is hid from them. Afflictions do Cloud it: troubles do over-shadow it: crosses do dim it: and there is an interposition of the earth betwixt their sight and it. But this is most certain and sure, that the best is behind with the children of God; all the sweet is to come; their happiness doth not appear in this world. Their life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in glory. It doth not yet appear what they shall be; but when he cometh, they shall be made like unto him. Their names are already taken, & entred into the book of life, and one day they shall be crowned. One day

Gen. 32 12. Jonah 2 1 King. 17. Jos. 10. Exod. 14. Dan. 3. & 6.

1 John 3. 21.

Col. 3. 3, 4.

day it shall be said unto them, Come yee blessed, &c. One day they shall enjoy his
Psa 16. presence; where is fulnesse of joy, and at whose right hand there is pleasures for evermore. Therefore let all Gods secret ones rejoyce, sing and be merry. For howsoever in this world they be contemned, trodden underfoot, made no-bodies, and walk as shadows; being counted as the very rags of the earth, and the abjects of the world: yet the time will come, when their happinesse and felicity shall be such as never entred into the heart of man: it is endlesse, unspeakable, and unconceivable.

Phil. I do now plainly see, that there is no cause why Gods people should be too heavy and dumpish in their afflictions. I see, that though they be not free from all afflictions, yet are they free from all hurtful afflictions. For no rod, no cross, no chastisement, is hurtful unto them, but all, in the conclusion, cometh to a blessed issue.

Theol. You have uttered a great and a most certain truth. For there is no affliction or tryal, which God imposeth upon his children, but if they endure it quietly, trust in his mercy firmly, and tarry his good pleasure obediently, it hath a blessed and a comfortable end. Therefore the people of God may well be merry in the midst of their sorrows. They may with patience and comfort submit themselves to their Fathers corrections, taking them patiently, and even kissing his holy Rod, and saying in themselves, Sith my Father will have it so, I am

content

content; seeing it is his mind, I am willing withal. As old Eli said, It is the Lord, let him do what he will. And as David in like submission, said in a certain case, Behold, here am I: let him do to mee as it seemeth good in his own eyes And again hee saith, I was dumb, & opened not my mouth; because thou Lord hast done it. Behold here then the patience of Gods Saints, and their humble submission unto his most holy will. They know all shall end well, and that maketh them glad to think of it. I conclude then, that the Children of God are happy in what state soever they are; happy in trouble, happy out of trouble; happy in poverty, happy in plenty; blessed in sickneſſe, blessed in health; blessed at home likewise, and abroad; and every way blessed. But on the contrary, the wicked are cursed in what state soever they are, cursed in sickneſſe, cursed in health; cursed in plenty, cursed in poverty; cursed in prosperity, cursed in adversity; cursed in honour, cursed in dishonour: For all things work together for their destruction Nothing doth them any good. They are not any thing the better, either for Gods mercies or judgements. All weathers are alike unto them. They are alwaies the same, in prosperity and adversity; they are no changelings. And as we say, A good year doth not mend them, nor an ill year pair them.

1 Sam. 3. 18.
2 Sam. 15. 26.
Psa. 39. 9.
Deut. 28.

Ph. You have long insisted upon this point. Now proceed to the fourth sign of a mans damnation, which is the contempt of the Go-

Gospel, and lay open both the greatness of the sin, and the danger of it.

Theol. This sin is of another nature then the former. It is a sin against the first Table. It toucheth the person of God himself. For to contemn the Gospel; it is to contemn God himself whole Gospel it is. If to contemn the Ministers of the Gospel, be to contemn God and Christ, (as our Lord Jesus avoucheth) how much more then to contemn the Gospel its self? Therefore it is dangerous medling with this sin. It is to meddle with edged tools, to meddle with Princes matters, to touch the Ark, to come near the holy Mountain, all which were things full of great peril and danger. Yea, it is to spill the Sacrament. It is Noli me tangere: It is to rail at a King. It is to spet God in the face. It is high treason against the King of glory. Therefore this sin, of all other, can never be endured, and may at no hand be born withal. For can a mortal King endure the contempt of his Laws? Can he put up the contempt of his own person? can he abide any to spet at his Scepter, or to throw a stone at it? No surely he will not. Therefore the holy Ghost saith, He that despiseth *Moses*'s Laws, dyeth without mercy, under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be worthy, which treadeth under foot the Son of God, and counteth the blood of the Testament as an unholy thing (wherewith he was sanctified) and doth despise the Spirit

Luk. 10. 16.

Heb. 10. 28.

rit of Grace? **And again,** if they were punished which obeyed not the word spoken by Angels, how shall wee escape if wee neglect so great salvation? if they escaped not, which refused him that spake on earth, how shall we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven? **Therefore our Saviour Christ saith, That** it shall be easier for *Sodom* in the day of judgement, then for the contemners of the Gospel. Heb. 2. 2, 3. Heb. 12. 25. Luk. 10. 12.

Moreover he saith, The Queen of the South shall rise up in judgement against all froward despisers of his VVord. For she came from the uttermost parts of the earth, to hear the wisdome of *Salomon*: and behold, a greater then *Salomon* is here. **For Christ is greater then** Salomon; **his doctrine and wisdome far more excellent. And therefore their sin is the greater which contemn it. They shall never be able to answer it. For the Spirit saith,** He that despiseth the word, shall be destroyed. **St.** Peter **also teacheth us, that the old world, and men of the first age, are now in hell-fire, because they both despised, and were disobedient to the doctrine of Christ; which (though not personally, yet in his divine Spirit)** hee spake by *Noah*. **So then wee see clearly, God will never take it at our hands, that his glorious Gospel should bee so universally and openly contemned as it is.** Mat. 12. 42. Pro. 13. 13. 1 Pet. 3. 19. 1 Pet 3. 20.

Phil. you have spoken most truly, and also shewed it out of the Scriptures that the contempt of the Gospel is a most hainous sin; yet for all that, it is most lamentable to consider, how little men esteem it, and how light they

they make of it. Many regard it no more than an egge-shell, they think it not worth a galley half-penny; they will not go to the door to hear it; they take it to be a breath from us, and a sound to them, and so the matter is ended.

They esteem it but as a noise, or empty sound in the air; or as a voyce afar off, that a man understandeth not; they never felt the power of it in their hearts: Therefore they prefer their Sheep, their Farms, their Oxen, their Profits, their Pleasures, yea, every thing before it: they know it not to bee any such precious jewel, as it is. Although our Lord Jesus himself compare it to a hid treasure, and a most precious pearl, yet these filthy swine of the world tread it under feet, for they know not the price of it. Though *Salomon* the wise saith, All the merchandize of gold and silver, pearl, and precious stones, are not to bee compared to it; yet these Beasts, these dogs, and hogs of the world, contemn it. They esteem a Cow more than Christs most glorious Gospel.

Pro. 3. 14.

They are like *Esops* Cock, which made more account of a Barley corn, than all the precious stones in the world; they are like little children, that esteem their rattle more than a bag of gold; they are like the *Gadarens*, which esteemed their hogs more than Christ and his Gospel; they make nothing of it: they think it not worth the while. Many of them sit idle in the streets, even upon the Sabbaths; while the Gospel is preached in their Churches; many are at Cards and Tables in the Ale-houses. Many on the Sabbath-

sleep

sleep upon their beds all the Sermon while in the afternoon. Many will hear a Sermon in the foore-noon, and they take that to be as much as God can require at their hands, and that he is somewhat beholden to them for it; but as for the afternoon, they will hear none: then they will to Bowls or Tables. These men serve God in the fore-noon, and the Devil in the after-noon. Some runne after Whores and Harlots on the Sabbath, some runne to Dancing and Bear-baiting, some sit upon their Stalls, some sit in their Shops, some by the Fire side, some sit idle in the Streets, some go to the Stool-ball, and others look on. O miserable Wretches! O cursed Caitiffs! O monstrous Hell-hounds, which so grossly and openly contemn the Gospel of Christ! what will become of them in the end? Assuredly their damnation sleepeth not. A thousand deaths wait for them; they lye open on all sides to the wrath of God. And we may wonder at his marvellous patience, that hee doth not throw down balls of wilde-fire from Heaven to consume and burn up both them, their shops and houses, and even make them spectacles of his vengeance, for so notorious contempt of such sacred, holy and high things.

Theol. **You have spoken very truely, zealously and religiously; and I do greatly commend you for it. And I must needs affirm the same things, for they cannot bee denyed, and for mine own part, I think the Gospel was never so openly contemned in any age (of a people living under the**

the profession of it, and under a godly and Christian Prince) as it is in this age. For howsoever some make a shew of Religion, yet they have denyed the power thereof. They turn the grace of God into
Jude. 4. wantonnesse, as St. Jude saith. They make the Gospel a cloak for their sinns. They receive it, and embrace it, as it will best stand with their profits and pleasures, their lusts and likings, their credits and policies, and not a jot further. They will practise it at their pleasure.
Tit. 1. 16. These men profess they know God: but by their works they deny him, and are abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate. This age is full of such carnal Protestants.

Phil. This age indeed aboundeth with many hollow-hearted hypocrites, dissemblers, and time-servers, which howsoever they make a face, and bear a countenance, as though they loved the Gospel, yet their heart is not with it. Their heart is with Atheism, their heart is with Popery, they have a Pope in their belly: they be Church-Papists. Howsoever, now and then they come to the Church, and hear a Sermon, and shew a good countenance to the Preacher, yet their heart goeth after covetousnes. The Lord complaineth of this by the Prophet, saying, This
Ezek. 33. 32. people will sit before thee, and hear thy words: but they will not do them. For with their mouths they make jests: and their heart goes after covetousnes. God complaineth of this also by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, say-
Ier. 7. 9. ing, Will you steal, murther, and commit adultery,

dultery, and ſwear falſely, and ſtand before me in this houſe, whereupon my name is called, and ſay, We are delivered, though we have done all theſe abominations? Is this houſe become a den of theives, whereupon my Name is called? Where we ſee how the Lord doth chide his people, and ſharpely reprove them for abuſing of his Temple, worſhip and ſacrifices, making them a cloak for their ſins: and making his houſe a den of theeves, which ſhould bee an aſſembly of Saints. Now all this is a lively deſcription of our time, wherein many uſe the exerciſes of the Word, Prayer, and Sacraments, not to kill and mortifie ſin, but to nouriſh and ſhelter their ſins. For they blindly imagine, that if they come to the Church, and pray, and hear the Sermon, they are diſcharged of their ſins, though they leave them not. They imagine they have given God his full due; and that therefore they may be the more bold to ſin afterward. Theſe kind of hypocrites are like rogues which uſe medicines not to cure ſores, but to make ſores. Theſe are like the Papiſts, which think if they hear Maſs in the morning, they may do what they liſt all the day after.

Theol. **I ſee now you have very well profitted in the knowledge of God and true Religion. You have ſpoken ſoundly, and like a man of knowledge in Gods matters. For the common ſort of people think indeed, that all Religion conſiſteth in the outward ſervice of God, though their hearts be far from him. To whom God may juſtly ſay,** This people draweth near

near mee with their lips, but their hearts are
Mat. 15. 8. far from mee. **Of whom also God may justly take up all his just complaints of his people** Israel **and** Judah; **which are so frequent in all the Prophets: to wit, that he did abhor their sacrifices, loathe their oblations, detest their incense, despise their new-Moons, disdain their Rams, Lambs,**
Isa. 66. **and Goats, accounting them all but as mans blood, dogs blood, swines blood; and all because their hands were full of blood; because they executed not Justice and Judgement in the gate; because they were not obedient to his will: because their hearts were not with him; because they used, or rather abused all these things as shelters for their sins.**

Phil. The great contempt of the Ministers of the Gospel in this age doth strongly argue the contempt of the Gospel it self. For a man cannot love the Gospel, and hate the faithful Ministers thereof. But wee see by lamentable experience, that the most grave, godly, and learned Ministers, are had in derision of very base and vile persons. And as Job saith, They whose Fathers I have refused to set with the dogs of my flocks, they were the children of fools, and the children of villaines, which were more vile then the earth. For now every rascal dares scoff and scorn at the most grave and ancient Fathers and Pastors of the Church, dares flout them as they walk in the streets, and as they ride by the high-waies. And though the holy
Tit. 1. 7. Ghost giveth them glorious and lofty titles, (as the Stewards of Gods own house, disposers

disposers of his secrets, disbursers of his treasure, keepers of the broad seal, keepers of the keys of heaven, Gods Secretaries, Gods Ambassadors, Angels; yea, the very glory of Christ: and all this to expresse the excellency of their calling) yet these vile varlets and venemous vermine of the earth, dare call them proud Prelates, pild Parsons, pelting Priests. O monstrous and intollerable impiety! Now it is come to pass, that this most sacred Function (which is glorious in the sight of God and his Angels, and in it self most honourable) is had in greatest contempt of all callings. For now the earth is full of rank Atheists, and mock-Gods, which scoff at the Gospel, and bleat out their tongues at all religion. These kinde of Fellows never dissemble for the matter, they make no shew at all, they are no hypocrites, they hide not their sins, but declare them openly like Sodom. They care not if they never come to the Church; they are too full of it. They live like bruite beasts. They think the Scriptures are but fables. They rail at the Ministers and Preachers; they make flat opposition against them, and are notorious mockers and past-graces.

1 Cor. 4. 1. Mat. 16 19. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Rev. 3. 7, 14. 1 Cor. 2 8.

Theol. **Of such the Apostle Saint** Peter **foretold, That** in the last dayes should come mockers, and such as would live after their own lusts, &c. **Of such, a godly writer saith,** *Verbum Dei secure contemnitur, promissiones inanes esse creduntur, minæ pro fabulis habentur:* **That is,** The Word of God is carelessly contemned, his promises are counted vain, and his threatnings fables. **Of such the Poet saith:**

Heu! vivunt homines tanquam mors nulla sequatur,
Aut velut infernus fabula vana foret. (*quatur*;
Alas! men live as they should never die;
Or as though speech of Hell were a stark lie.

Now is also the time, wherein the world swarmeth with Papists and Atheists; and most men live as if there were no God: For now Religion is hated, true godliness despised, zeal abhorred, sincerity scoffed at, uprightness loathed, Preachers contemned, Professors disdained, and almost all good men had in derision. For now we may justly complain with the Prophet, Judgement is turned backward, and justice standeth afar off: Truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth, and he that refraineth from evil, maketh himself a prey. **The Prophet** Micah **bewaileth the times, saying,** The good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none righteous among men. They all lye in wait for blood; every man hunteth his neighbour with a net. **The Prophet** Jeremiah **complaineth of the same evil in his time; namely, that the people were come to be past shame in sinning;** Were they ashamed (**saith he**) when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not ashamed, neither could they have any shame. **This is a lively picture, and a very counterpane of our time: for now we have put on a brow of brass; we are become impudent in sin, we cannot blush we cannot be ashamed: we are almost past shame, and past grace. O Lord, what will this our grow to in the end!**

Isa. 59. 14.

Mic. 7. 2.

Jer. 8. 12.

Phil.

Phil. We may justly fear some great judgment of God to be near unto us: yea, even to hang over our heads. For the Lord will never leave the contempt of his Gospel and his Ministry unpunished.

Theol. **You have spoken a truth; and we have heard before how the old World was plagued for it. And we read how grievously the Jews were afflicted by the Romans for this sin: as our Lord Jesus did plainly foretel. We read also, that after the Lord had preached the Gospel himself, and spread it abroad by his Apostles, conquering the World thereby, (which thing was signified by the white Horse, his Rider, his Bow, and his Crown) and yet shortly after, saw that the same began to be contemned in the World, and made light of; then he did in most fearful manner plague the earth with wars, bloodsheddings, tumults, dearth, famine, and pestilence; which are all signified by the red horse, the black horse, and the pale horse, which did appear at the opening of the second, third, and fourth seal. So likewise undoubtedly, God will severely punish all injuries, wrongs & contempts done to his faithful Embassadors, as appeareth, Rev. 11. 5. where it is set down, That,** If any would hurt the two witnesses with their two olives, and two candlesticks, **(whereby is signified the faithful Preachers of the Gospel, with all their spiritual treasures and heavenly light)** fire should proceed out of their mouths, and devour their adversaries: **that is, The fire** Rev. 6. 2.

of Gods wrath should consume all that had oppressed them, either by mocks, flouts, railings, slanders, imprisonment, or any other kind of indignity. Of this wee have a plain example or two in the Scripture. First, we read how fire came down from heaven, & consumed the contemptuous Captain and his fifty, at the threatning and calling for of Elijah. Secondly, how two Bears came out of the forrest, and tare in pieces two and forty youthers which mocked Elisha, the Prophet of God, calling him bald-head, bald-head. So then by these examples it is manifest, that howsoever the Lord may wink at these things for a time, and make as though he saw them not, yet the time will come, when he will rain fire and brimstone upon all the scoffers of his faithful Ministers, and contemners of his Gospel. All this is plainly declared in the first chapter of the Proverbs of Salomon: where is shewed how the wisdom of God, even Jesus Christ the highest wisdom, doth cry aloud all abroad in the world, and manifest himself in the open streets; but yet is contemned of wicked worldlings, and scoffing fools. Therefore saith Christ, Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, but none would regard: ye have hated knowledge, & despised all my counsel; therefore I will laugh at your destruction, & mock when your fear cometh upon you, like a sudden desolation; and your destruction like a whirl-wind. Then shall they call upon mee, but I will not answer, they shall seek me early but

2 Kin. 1. 10.
2 Kin. 2. 24.
Pro. 1. 24, 25.

but they shall not find mee **Herein then we see his terrible wrath & vengeance threatned from heaven against all prophane contemners of Christ and his everlasting Gospel, or any of the faithful Publishers and Proclaimers thereof. Behold therefore, ye despisers, and wonder: consider well what will become of you in the end. Do not think that the most just God will alwaies put it up at your hands, that yee should so manifestly condemn both his Word, and most zealous Preachers, and Professors thereof. No, no: assure your selves, he will be even with you at last. He will smite you both sideling and overthwart: he will dog you and pursue you with his judgements, and never leave following the chase with you, till hee hath destroyed you, and consumed you from off the face of the earth. For remember, I pray you, what he saith in** Deuteronomy, If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold of judgement, I will execute vengeance on mine enemies, and I will reward them that hate me: I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall eat the flesh of mine adversaries. Deut. 32. 41. 42.

Phil. Truly, Sir, we may justly fear, that for our great contempt of the Gospel, and generall coldnesse, both in the profession and practise thereof, God will take it from us, and give it to a people that will bring forth the fruit thereof.

Theol. **Wee may well fear indeed, lest for our sins, especially our loathing of the heavenly** Manna, **the Lord remove our**

candlestick, take away our silver trumpets, let us no more hear the sweet bells of Aaron, cause all vision to fail, and our Sabbaths to cease, and bring upon us that most grievous and sore famine of not hearing the word of the Lord, spoken of by Amos the Prophet. Then shall our Halcyon days and golden years, be turned into weeping, mourning, and lamentation. God for his infinite mercy sake, turn it away from us.

Amos. 8 11.

Phil. Amen, Amen; and let us all pray earnestly, night and day, that those fearful judgments may, according to Gods infinite mercy, bee held back, which our sins do continually cry for; and that his most glorious Gospel may be continued to us and our posterity, even yet with greater success.

Asm. No doubt it is a very great sin to despise the Word of God; and I think there is none so bad that will do it. For we ought to love Gods Word, God forbid else. He that loveth not Gods VVord, it is pity he liveth.

Theol. These are but words of course: It is an easie matter to speak good words: and very many will say as you say. But both you and they in your practise, do plainly shew that you make no reckoning of it, you esteem it no more then a dishclout. I think, if the matter were well tryed, you have scant a Bible in your house. But though you have one, it is manifest that you seldome read therein with any care or conscience and as seldome hear the word preached. How else could you be so ignorant as you are?

Asm.

Asin. I grant that I and some others are somewhat negligent in the hearing and reading of the Word of God; but you cannot say therefore we do contemn it.

Theol. **Yes verily: your continual negligence and carelesnesse doth argue a plain contempt. Sure it is, you have no appetite nor stomach to the holy Word of God. You had rather do any thing, then either read or meditate in it: it is irksome unto you; you read not two chapters in a week. All holy exercises of Religion are most bitter and tedious unto you: they are as Vinegar to your teeth, and smoke to your eyes. The immoderate love of this World, and of Vanity, hath took away your appetite from all heavenly things. And whereas you shift it off with negligence, as though that would excuse you; the Apostle hits you home, when he saith** How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? **Mark, that he saith,** If we neglect. Heb. 2. 3.

Asin. Belike you think men have nothing else to do, but to read the Scripture, and hear Sermons.

Theol. **I do not say so: I do not say you should do nothing else. For God doth allow you with a good conscience, and in his fear, to follow the works of your calling, as hath been said before. But this I condemn in you and many others, that you will give no time to private prayers, reading and meditation in Gods Word, neither morning nor evening; neither before your business, nor after. And although**

you have often vacant time enough, yet you will rather bestow it in vanity, and idle prating, and gossiping, then in any good exercise of Religion. Which doth plainly shew, that you neither delight in holy things, neither is there any true fear of God before your eyes.

Anti. I tell you plainly we must tend our business, we may go beg else, we cannot live by the Scriptures. If wee follow Sermons, we shall never thrive. What, do you think every man is bound to read the Scriptures? Have we not our five wits? Do we not know what wee have to do? You would make Fools of us belike. But we are neither drunk nor mad.

Theol. **That every man (of what condition soever) is bound in conscience to hear and read the word of God, hath been shewed and proved in the beginning of our conference: but as for your five wits, they will not serve your turn in these matters, though you had fifteen wits. For all the wit, reason, and understanding of natural men, in Gods matters is but blindnesse and meer foolishnesse. The Apostle saith, That** the wisdom of the most wise in this world, is not onely foolishness with God, but indeed very enmity against God. **And again he saith, That**, the natural man (**with all his five wits**) understandeth not the things of the spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. **Most prudently to this point speaketh** Elihu, **saying,** There is a spirit in man, but the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.

1 Cor. 3. 19. Rom. 8. 7. 1 Cor. 2 14. Job 32. 8.

Anti.

Antil. I understand not these Scriptures which you do alledge; they do not sink into my head.

Theol. **I think so indeed: for the Holy Ghost saith,** Wisdom is too high for a fool. Pro. 24. 7.

Antil. What, do you call me fool? I am no more fool than your self.

Theol. **I call you not fool: but I tell you what the Scripture saith; which calleth all men (though otherwise never so wise, politick and learned) very fools, till they be truely enlightned and inwardly sanctified by the Spirit of God: as appeareth,** Tit. 3. 3 **where the Apostle affirmeth, that both** Titus **and himself, before they received the illuminating Spirit of Gods grace, were very fools, without wit, and without all sense in Gods matters.**

Phil. I pray you, good Mr. *Theologus*, let him alone; for he will never have done cavilling. I see hee is a notable caviller. Let us therefore proceed to speak of the fifth sign of condemnation, which is swearing.

Theol. **It may well indeed be called a signe of condemnation. For I think it more then a sign, it is indeed an evident demonstration of a Reprobate. For I never knew any man truely fearing God in his heart, that was an usual and a common swearer.**

Phil. I am flat of your minde for that. For it cannot bee, that the true fear of God and ordinary swearing should dwell together in one man, sith swearing is a thing forbidden by a flat statute: And God addeth a sore threat to his Law, that hee will not hold

hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain; but will most sharply and severely punish that man.

Theol. You say true. And God saith moreover, That if we do not fear and dread his glorious and fearful Name JEHOVAH, he will make our plagues wonderful. He saith also by his Prophet Malachy, That he will be as a swift witnesse against swearers. The Prophet Zachary saith, That the flying book of Gods curse and vengeance, shall enter into the house of the swearer, and he shall be cut off.

Deut. 28. 58. Mal. 3. 5. Zach. 5. 4.

Therefore let all swearers take heed, and look to themselves in time, for we see there is a rod in pisse laid up in store for them.

Phil. These threatnings being so great and grievous, and that from the God of heaven himself, a man would think it should cause mens hearts to quake and tremble, and make them afraid to rap out such oaths as they do, if they were not altogether hardned, past feeling, and past grace.

Theol. True indeed, but yet we see by lamentable experience, how men are given over both to swear and for-swear: for at this day there is no sin more common amongst us, then swearing; for many there be, which cannot speak ten words, but one shall be an oath. And numbers have got such a wicked custome of swearing, that they can by no means leave it, no more then a Black-moor can change his skin or a Leopard his spots: for it is made natural unto them through custom,

and

and they have got the habit of it. I do verily think, if it were high treason to swear, yet some could not leave swearing. And sure I am (as light as we make of it) that it is high treason against the Crown of Heaven: yea, it is a sin immediately against God, even against his own person: and therefore he hath forbidden it in the first Table of his Law.

Phil. Questionless this vice of swearing is, of all other sins, most rife in this Land. For you shall have little boys and children in the streets, rap out oaths in most fearful manner. It would make a mans heart quake to hear them. We may think, they have sucked them out of their mothers breasts: but sure we are, they have learned them from the evil example of their Parents. And now adays we cannot almost talk with a man, but (in ordinary speech) he will belch out one or another.

Theol. **I will tell you a strange thing; and with great grief I speak it, I do verily think there are sworn in this Land an hundred thousand oaths every day in the year.**

Phil. No doubt, Sir, you are within compass. For now almost so many men, so many oaths; excepting some few in comparison. Nay, I know divers of mine own experience, which if they may be kept in talk, will swear every day in the year an hundred oaths for their parts.

Theol. **O what a lamentable thing is it! we may well take up the old complaint of the Prophet Jeremiah, who saith, that in**

Jer. 23. 10. in his time, The Land did mourn because of oaths. **And we may well wonder that the Land sinketh not because of oaths. For if God were not a God of infinite patience, how could he endure his most sacred & glorious Name to be so many thousand times blasphemed in one day, and that by such miserable wretches as we be!**

Phil. We may indeed admire and wonder at the patience and long-suffering of God, that he spareth us so long, and giveth us so large a time of repentance. But sure it is, that the Prophet saith, That howsoever the Nah. 1. 3. Lord is slow to anger, yet he is great in power, and will not surely clear the wicked: Though hee may wink at their monstrous oaths for a time, yet he forgetteth them never a whit, but scoreth them up, & registreth them in his book of accounts: so as they stand in record against them. And when the great day of reckoning shall come, he will set them all in order before them, and lay them to their charge.

Let not the wicked swearers and blasphemers thereof, think that they shall alwaies scape scot-free, because God letteth them alone a while, and deferreth their punishment. For the longer God deferreth, the more terrible will his strokes bee when they come. The longer an arrow is held in the bow, the stronger will be the shot when it cometh forth. Though God have leaden feet, and cometh slowly to execute wrath, yet hee hath an iron hand, and will strike deadly when he cometh. Though God giveth the Jo. 24. 23. wicked security for a time, (saith *Job*) yet his

his eyes are fixed upon all their wayes. And in another place he saith, The wicked are reserved unto the day of destruction, and they shall be brought forth unto the day of wrath. So then, the holy man *Job* plainly affirmeth, that the state and condition of all the rich and wealthy worldlings, is as the condition of an Oxe, that is fatted up against the day of slaughter. For he saith; They spend their daies in wealth, & suddenly go down to hell. But now I pray you nominate the oaths which are so rife and common amongst us.

Job 21. 30.

Job 21. 13.

Theol. **There be six oaths which are (of all other) most rife and common, in every mans mouth; and they be these:**

By my Faith.	**By St. Mary.**
By my Troth.	**By God.**
By our Lady.	**As God shall judge me.**

Six common oaths.

For you cannot rightly talke with a man, but he will bath out some one of these in his ordinary speech.

Asun. Do you count it so great a matter for a man so swear by his Faith, or his Troth?

Theol. **Yes indeed do I. For our Faith and our Troth, are the most precious Jewels we have. Shall we then lay them to gage for every word we speak: it sheweth we are of small credit, nay very bankrupts. For who but a bankrupt will lay the best jewel in his house to pledge for every small trifle?**

Asun. I know a man that will never swear but by Cock, or Py, or Mouse-foot. I hope you will not say these be oaths. For he is as honest a man as ever brake bread. You shall not hear an oath come out of his mouth.

Theol. I do not think he is so honest a man as you make him: for it is no small sin to swear by creatures. The Lord saith by his Prophet Jeremiah, They have forsaken mee and sworn by them that are no Gods: So then to swear by creatures, is to forsake God: and I trow you will not say, He is an honest man which forsaketh God.

Jer. 5. 7.

Asun. I do not believe, that to swear by small things is a forsaking of God.

Theol. You, and such as you are, will believe no more of the Word of God, then will stand with your fantasie. But, whatsoever you believe, or believe not, the word of God standeth sure: and no jot of it shall ever be proved false. But this I will say unto you, because you think it so small a matter to swear by Creatures, That the more vile and base the thing is that you swear by, the greater is the oath: because you ascribe that unto a base Creature, which is onely proper to God: namely, to know our hearts, and be a discerner of secret things. For whatsoever a man sweareth by, he calleth it as a witnesse unto his conscience, that he speaketh the truth, and lyeth not: which thing onely belongeth unto God. And therefore in swearing by Creatures, we rob God of his honour: therefore to swear by the crosse of the mony, or by bread, or by mouse foot, or the fire, which they call Gods Angel, or any such like, is a robbing God of his honour, and an ascribing of that to the Creature, which is proper onely to the Creator.

Asun.

Asun. What say you then to them that swear by the Mass, and by the Rood?

Theol. **Their sin is as great as the other: for it is an haynous thing to swear by Idols; as St. Mary our Lady, by the Mass, by the Rood, &c. The Prophet** Amos **saith,** They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and that say, Thy God, O Dan, liveth: even they shall fall, and never rise up again. **To swear by the sin of Samaria, is to swear by Idols: for** Samaria **was full of Idols.** Amos 8. 14.

Moreover, the Lord threatneth by the Prophet Zephanie, **That he will cut off them that swear by the Lord, and by** Malcham, **or by their King. For the Idolaters called their Idol** Molech **their King.** Zeph. 1. 5.

Asun. Seeing you condemn both swearing by Creatures, and swearing by Idols; what then must we swear by? You would have us swear by nothing, belike.

Theol. **In our ordinary communication we must not swear at all, either by one thing or another: but (as our Lord teacheth us)** our communication must be Yea, yea, Nay, nay: For whatsoever is more then these, cometh of evil. **And St.** James **saith,** Before all things, my Brethren, swear not, neither by Heaven, nor by Earth, nor by any other oath: but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay, lest you fall into condemnation. Mat. 5. 37. James 5. 12.

Asun. It seemeth you are an Anabaptist. You condemn all swearing, you will have no swearing at all.

Theol. **Not so: for though I condemn**

swearing by creatures, swearing by idols, and vain swearing: yet I do allow of swearing before a Magistrate, & privately also, in matters of weight & importance, for the further bolting out of the truth.

This is warranted from Gods own mouth, where he saith, Thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth in truth, in judgement, and in righteousnes. And in these cases onely the name of God is to be sworn by, as it is written, Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and thou shalt serve him, and shalt cleave unto him, & shalt swear by his Name.

Jer. 4. 2.

Deut. 10. 20.

Asun. May we not swear by God, in our common talke?

Theol. At no hand. For that it is to take the Name of God in vain, which you know is forbidden. And one of the wise Heathens could say thus, When an oath is laid upon thee, undertake it for two causes: either to deliver thy self from some grievous crime and accusation, or else to preserve thy friends from danger. So then, that Heathen man in common talke will not allow any oath, much less to swear by God. Another saith, Avoid an oath, though thou swear truely. So then we see vain swearing condemned even by Heathens.

Isocrat. ad Demon.

Phocyl.

Asun. Yea, but for all that we must swear, men will not believe us else.

Theol. Neither yet will they believe you any whit the more for your swearing. For it doth manifestly appear, that thousands make no conscience at all of it: they make no more conscience of it, than of cracking of nuts: and therefore what wise man will be-

believe them, though they swear never so much & But if you would make conscience alwaies to speak the truth from your heart, without any oaths at all, you shall be better believed of all honest & wise men, then otherwise with a thousand oaths.

Antil. It is the custome to swear.

Theol. But a wicked & devillish custome.

Antil. I hope, sir, we may swear, as long as we swear truely, and swear by nothing but that which is good.

Theol. It hath been answered before that in vain matters you may not swear at all.

Antil. As long as we do no worse then that, I hope God will hold us excused.

Theol. God will not hold you excused, when you break his commandments, and continue so doing.

Antil. What say you then to them that swear wounds and blood, and such like, in a bravery, thinking that it setteth out their speech very well?

Theol. Hell gapeth for them: & they shall one day know what it is to blaspheme God.

Antil. What may we think of such as swear by Gods life, Gods soul, Gods body, Gods heart?

Theol. That their case is most woful and dangerous; and I quake at the naming of them. They are most horrible, monstrous, and outragious blasphemies: enough to make the stones in the streets to crack, and the clouds to fall upon our heads. And we may think that all the devils in Hell are in readiness to carry such blasphemous villaines headlong, into

that Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone for ever.

Anti. Do you find in Scripture, that God will so severely punish swearers?

Theol. Yes verily. For besides that which hath been spoken before, we have divers other examples. First of Senacherib, the King of Assyria, who for his outrageous blasphemies against the God of Heaven, was in most fearful and tragical manner, slain by his own Sons Adramalech and Sharezer, and that in the Temple, when he was worshipping his Idol-God Nisroch. And yet behold a more fearful example of Gods wrath against blasphemers.

2 King. 19. 37.

We read that an hundred thousand of the Aramites were slain by the Israelites, in one day for blaspheaming God, 1 King. 20. 29. and seven and twenty thousand being left, and fleeing into the City of Aphek for refuge, were all slain by the fall of an huge great wall. What shall I here speak how the seven sons of Saul the King of Israel were hanged up before the Lord in mount Gibeah, for the breach of the oath made to the Gibeonites long before? In these examples we may plainly see, that the just God, even in this life, sometimes will be revenged on blasphemers and oath-breakers. And therefore the very Heathen in all ages have been very careful for the performing of oaths: as Pharaoh King of Ægypt willed Joseph to go up into the Land of Canaan to bury his Father according to his oath made to his father.

1 Sam. 31.

Phil.

Phil. Mee thinketh these so terrible and fearful examples of Gods vengeance against swearers and blasphemers, should strike some terrour into the hearts of our blasphemers.

Theol. **One should think so indeed, if any thing could do it. But, alas, they are so hardned in it, and in all other sin, that nothing can move them, except peradventure there were a law made, that every swearer and blasphemer should hold his hand a quarter of an hour in boyling lead. This or some such like severe Law might peradventure curb them a little, and make them bite in their oaths. But otherwise they will never fear any thing, till they are in Hell-fire, when it will be too late to repent.**

Phil. What may be the cause of this so often and great swearing? for surely it is no inherent and in-bred sin in our nature, as some of the other sins be.

Theol. **No verily. But these three I judge to be the causes of it.**

Custome.
Want of admonition.
Want of punishment.

Phil. What then are the remedies of it?

Theol. **The remedies are these.**

Dis-use.	**Friendly admonition.**
Prayer.	**Some sharpe Law.**

Phil. Well Sir, now we have heard enough of swearing: I pray you proceed to the next sign of condemnation, which is lying.

Theol. **Swearing and lying be of very neer kindred: For hee that is a common swearer, is for the most part a common**

lyer

lyer also: For he that maketh no conscience of swearing, will make no conscience of lying. And as the Lord hateth the one, so also he hateth the other: and as he punisheth the one, so will he punish the other. Therefore Salomon saith, Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord. Saint John saith, Without shall be dogs, enchanters, whore-mongers, murtherers, and whosoever loveth or maketh lyes. Again, the same holy man of God saith, The Lyers shall have their part and portion in the Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Pro. 12. 22. Rev. 22. 15. Rev. 21. 8.

Phil. These Scriptures which you allege, do manifestly declare, that God abhorreth lyers, and hath reserved great torments for them. Therefore the Princely Prophet *David* saith, That hee would banish all Lyers from his house. Hee that telleth lyes, (saith he) shall not remain in my sight. A lying tongue is one of the six things which God doth hate, and his soul abhor. Yet for all this, wee see by lamentable experience, how many have even taught their tongues to lye, (as the Prophet saith) and there is no truth in thir lips. This vice is almost as common as swearing. For it is hard to find a man that will speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth from his heart, in simplicity and plainness, at all times, in all places, and amongst all persons, without all glozing or dissembling, either for fear, gain, flattery, men-pleasing, hiding of faults, or any sinister respect whatsoever. Where, I say, is this man to bee found? I would fain

Ps. 101. 7. Prov. 6. 16, 17. Ier. 9. 5.

see

see him, I would fain look upon such a man: it would do my heart good to behold him: I would rejoyce to set mine eyes upon such a man.

Theol. **Such a man as you speak of, is hardly to be found amongst the sons of men. They be black Swans in the earth, they be white Crows, they be rare birds. For there be very few that will speak the truth from their heart: yet some such I hope there be. But for the most part, and amongst the greater sort, lying, dissembling and fraud, do bear all the sway. There is no truth, no honesty, no conscience, no simplicity, no plain dealing amongst men in these most corrupt times. Faith and Truth are parted clean away. And as the Kingly Prophet saith,** The faithful are failed from among the Children of men. They speak deceitfully every one with his Neighbour; flattering with their lips, and speaking with a double heart. **Men now adays study the Art of Lying, Flattering, Fawning, Gloling and Dissembling: they have a heart and a heart. They have honey in their mouth, and gall in their heart. Their tongues are as soft as butter and oyl: but their hearts are full of bitternesse, poyson and wormwood. They are full of outward courtesie and Civility, full of Court-holy-water, when there is no Truth nor Plainnesse in their inward affection. They will speak you fair, when they would cut your throat. They will shew you a good Countenance, when**

Psa. 12. 1, 2.

when they would eat your heart with Garlick. In outward shew they will carry themselves plausibly, when their hearts are full of venome and malice. This Viperous brood do but watch their times and opportunities, till they can get a man upon the hip; and then they will sting him, and work their malice upon him. These fawning curs will not bark, till they bite, they will lurk and lye close, till they spie their vantage, and then they will shew themselves in their kind: then they will hoyst a man, and turn him over the perch, if they can. These men are like the waters, which are most deep when they are most calm; like a dangerous rock hid under a calm Sea; or as the Heathens say, Like the Syrens Song, which is the Sailers wrack: like the Fowlers whistle, which is the birds death: like the hid bait, which is the fishes bane: like the Harpies, which have Virgins faces, and Vultures tallons; or like Hyena, which spyeadeth like a friend, and devoureth like a foe; or, as the Scripture saith, like Joab, the Captain of the Hoast, which spake kindly to Amasa another Captain, and kissed him, when presently he stabb'd him: or like unto the Herodians and Pharisees servants, which came to our Lord Jesus with many fawning insinuations, calling him God Master, & telling him that he was the plain truth, that he taught the way of God truely, he regarded no mans person, and many good morrows, and all this geer, when as in very deed their pur-

2 Sam. 20. 10.

poſe

pose was to entangle him in his words, and to entrap him, that they might catch advantage against him, and so cut his throat, and give him pap with a hatchet. This is it which the wise man saith, A man that flattereth his neighbour, spreadeth a net for his feet. And again, As silver-dross over-laid upon an earthen pot; so are fawning lips and an evil heart. And in another place he saith, He that beareth hatred, will counterfeit with his lips: but he layeth up deceit in his heart; when he shall shew his voice favourably, trust him not; for there are seven abominations in his heart. He will cover hatred by deceit: but his malice shall be discovered in the Congregation. In another place he pronounceth a curse upon all these hollow-hearted hypocrites, and meal-mouthed flatterers. For saith he, Unto him that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, betimes in the morning, rising up early, a curse shall be imputed.

Pro. 29. 5.
Prov. 26 23.
Pro. 26. 23, to 27

Phil. You have very well described the conditions of the men of this age, which have faces, countenances, and tongues, but no hearts; which profess lying and dissembling; which say, He cannot live that cannot dissemble; which have fair faces, and false hearts; which have forgotten, that plain honesty is deep policy.

Theol The Holy Ghost often in the Proverbs of Salomon calleth all unregenerate men fools: or as it is in the Hebrew, men without hearts. Because they have no heart to God, no heart to his Word, no heart to his Children, no heart to Godliness,

neſſe, no heart to any thing that good is: they are without an honeſt heart, an upright heart, a plain heart: they are all in words, nothing in deeds: they promiſe mountains, and performe mole hills: they will ſpeak well of Religion, and practiſe nothing: they will give fair words to their friends, and do juſt nothing for them.

Phil. The world is full of theſe masked counterfeits: and lying and diſſembling did never more abound.

Theol. It is too true, that lying and diſſembling are moſt rife, and over-common vices amongſt all ſorts of men: but eſpecially it doth over-flow and ſuper-abound in ſhop keepers and ſervants. For both theſe make a trade and occupation of it: they can do no other but lye. It cleaveth unto them as the nail to the poſt.

Phil. I do certainly know ſome ſhop-keepers, which (to utter their bad wares, and to blind the eyes of the ſimple) do trade in lying all the day long, from Sun to Sun, from the opening of the ſhop and windows, to the ſhutting of the ſame. And what is their life, (if cuſtomers come in a pace) but ſwearing, lying, diſſembling and deceiving? They will lye as faſt as a dog will trot, as we ſay. It is a wonder that their ſhops and all their wares do not fire over their heads, for their ſo common, ſo lewd, and ſo abominable lying: and that againſt their own knowledge, againſt their conſcience, againſt God, againſt their neighbour, againſt heaven and earth, men and Angels.

Theol.

Theol. True it is, we may marvel at the long suffering of God in this behalf. But this is to be noted, that God doth not immediately punish all notorious sinners in this life, but reserveth thousands to the judgement of the great day. In this life he onely culleth out some few, whom he smiteth for the example of others, that they might fear and tremble, and learn by other mens harms to beware.

Therefore even in this life, we see before our eyes, some lyers, some drunkards, some whoremongers, some swearers, some misers of the world, some ruffians and cut-throats, stricken down by the revenging hand of God: But whereas God smiteth one of these in this life, he letteth an hundred escape. For if he should punish all offenders in this life, to what purpose should the judgement serve? If he should punish none, then we should think there were no God, or that he were shut up idle in heaven and would do neither good nor evil, nor once meddle in the matters of the earth; as some Epicures have dreamed. Therefore to avoid both these extremities, God in his heavenly wisdom hath thought good to meet with some, even in this world.

Phil. I am of this mind, that the goods which men get by swearing, lying, and deceit will never prosper.

Theol. You are not therein deceived For God will blow upon all such kind of evil-gotten goods, and they shall be put in a bottomlesse purse, as the Prophet saith.

The holy Ghost in the book of the Proverbs, hath many excellent sayings to this effect: as chap. 13. 11. The riches of vanity shall be diminished; but he which laboureth with the hand, shall encrease them. And again, He that dealeth deceitfully, shall become poor: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. In another place he saith, The deceitful man rosteth not that which he hath caught in hunting. That is, he shall not long injoy or taste the prey, which he hath gotten by fraud. For either one trouble or other will come upon him, that he shall not be able to possess, or take delight in the spoil. Therefore it is said, The bread of deceit is sweet to a man: but after, his mouth shall be filled with gravel. That is, in the end the crafty person shall meet with many troubles. For either his conscience will upbraid him and check him, or vengeance will plague him for his deceit. The fears, cares, & sorrows which he shall have, shall be as it were so many sharp stones to set his teeth on edge, and to vex him. Wherefore instead of meat, he shall feed on gravel; and instead of wheat, on pebble stones. Small pleasure is taken in the end, in goods ill gotten, or livings unlawfully come by. For the holy Ghost hath passed sentence upon them, that they shall never prosper.

Hag. 1. 6.
Pro. 10. 4.
Pro. 12. 27.

Phil. It sometimes falleth out, that they prosper for a time: but, as we say, the third heir shall never enjoy them: For God will curse them in our posterity: and our childrens children shall feel the smart of our sins.

sins. Therefore the holy man *Job* saith, The off-spring of the wicked shall not be satisfied with bread: for out of doubt God will bless that onely which is got with a good conscience, in the works of our calling; and it shall remain blessed unto us, and our posterity. Therefore the Spirit saith, The just man that walketh in his uprightnes, is blessed, and blessed shall his children be after him. But God will not bless, but curse that which is got with an evil conscience; as swearing, lying, dissembling, deceiving, &c. Job 27. 14. Pro. 20. 7.

Theol. **Some ancient Writers have spoken very prudently to this point. For one saith,** *Injusta lucra breves habent voluptates, longos autem dolores:* **That is,** Unjust gain hath long sorrow, and short joy. **Another saith,** *Eligas damnum potius quàm turpe lucrum: illud enim semel tantum te dolore afficiet, hoc verò semper:* **That is,** Chuse loss, rather than filthy lucre: for the one will grieve thee but once, the other for ever. **A third saith,** *Melius est honestè pauperem esse, quam turpiter divitem. Hoc enim commiserationem, illud verò reprehensionem adfert:* It is better to be honestly poor, than wickedly rich. For the one moveth pity, the other reproof. Jerom. August. Bernar.

One of the wise Heathen also saith, We may not wax rich unjustly, **but live of just things which he calleth holy things.** Eurip. Phenes.

Phil. Have we not examples in the Scriptures of such as have been punished for lying?

Theol. **Yes: for we read how the** Gibeonites, **for their lying and dissembling were made drudges and slaves to the** Israelites, Josh. 9. 23.

2 Kings 5. 27. Gehezi also the servant of Elisha the Prophet, for his lying and covetousnesse together, was smitten with a most grievous leprosie. Ananias and Saphira his wife, Act. 5. 5, 10 for their lying & dissembling were stricken down starke dead by the immediate hand of God, by the rebuke of Peter.

Zophar, one of Jobs friends, speaking of these kind of men, saith, They shall suck Job 20. 16, 24. the gall of Aspes, and the Vipers tongue shall slay them. They shall flie from the iron weapons and a bow of steel shall strike them thorow.

Now then by all these examples, we may plainly see, how greatly God abhorreth lying and dissembling.

Phil. O therefore that we could follow the counsel of the Apostle, who saith, Lye not one to another: sith you have put off the Col. 3. 9. Ephe. 4. 25. old man with his works. And again, Cast away lying, and speake every one the truth to his neighbour. The manner of speech which the Apostle useth, is very forcible, implying thus much, That we should in a kind of disdain or detestation cast it away, and throw it from us, as a filthy stinking and betrayed clout, hanging about a mans neck, which he doth suddenly snatch away, and hurl into the fire; as being ashamed that ever it should be seen or known. Would to God therefore that we were come to such a detestation and loathing of lying, that we would even spattle at it, and cry, Fie upon it, and all that use it! O that we could hate it as the Devil, which is the Father of it; and as hell fire, which is the reward of it! O that we

we were come but so far as the Heathen man, who saith, I hate him as the gates of Hell, who hath one thing in his tongue, and another in his heart. Homer. Iliad. 3.

Anti. Yet for all this, we find in the Scriptures, that even some of the godly have been taken tardy in lying, and yet have not sinned in so doing; as *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *Rahab*, the Midwives of *Egypt*; and therefore why may not we do so too?

Theol. **I told you before, that you may not make the infirmities of Gods people, rules for you to live by. And further I answer, that all these did offend in their lying. Some of them indeed, I grant are commended for their love to the Church, and charitable affections to Gods people; but none of them simply for lying, which is a thing condemned even of the heathen. For saith one of them,** Lying doth corrupt the life of man; and every wise and godly man doth hate lying. Eurip. Phenis.

Anti. But may not we lye now and then for advantage

Theol. **No verily: neither is there any good vantage to be got that way. For when you have made up your accounts, all charges deducted, & all expences defrayed, your clear gains will be very small. For by your wilful and customary lying, you gain inward grief, and lose true joy; you gain short pleasure and lose perpetual glory; you gain hell, and lose Heaven; you make the devil your friend, and God your enemy. Now then reckon your gain.**

Phil. I pray you let us grow towards a con-

conclusion of this point: and shew us briefly the chief causes of lying.

Theol. **The chiefe causes of lying are these:**

Custome.	**Covetousnesse.**
Fear.	**The Devil.**

Phil. What be the remedies?

Theol. **The remedies be these:**

Disuse.	**Contentation.**
Godly boldnesse.	**Earnest Prayer.**

Phil. You have spoken enough of this vice. to cause all such to abhor it, and forsake it, as have any drop of grace, or spark of Gods fear in them: but as for them that are filthy, let them be more filthy. Now, I pray you, speak your judgement of the seventh sign of condemnation which is drunkennesse.

Theol. **It is so brutish and beastly a sin, that a man would think it should not need to be spoken against: but that all reasonable men should even abhor it, and quake to think of it. For it is a most swinish thing it maketh of man a beast: it taketh away the heart of man from all godnesse, as witnesseth the Prophet** Hosea, chap. 4. 11. **saying,** Whoredome, wine and new wine, take away the heart. **For what heart, what stomack, what appetite, can whoremongers and drunkards have to any thing that is good either to hear, or to read the Word of God, or to pray, or to meditate in the same? Alas, they are far from it, far from God, and far from all grace and godnesse. Therefore the Prophet** Joel **saith,** Awake ye drunkards: weep and howl ye drinkers of wine. **Yea, the mighty God**

Joel. 1. 5.

of

of heaven doth pronounce a woe against them, saying, Wo unto them that rise up early to follow drunkenness; and to them that continue until night, till the wine do enflame them. Our Lord Jesus giveth us a caveat to take heed of it: Take heed, saith he, that your hearts be not overcome with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. Thus you hear how both Christ himself, and sundry of the Prophets, do thunder down from heaven against this gross beastliness, which now aboundeth and reigneth amongst the sons of men. Isa. 5. 11. Luk. 21. 34.

Phil. True indeed: but yet almost nothing will make men leave it; for it is a most rife and over-common Vice. Wee see many that think themselves some bodies, (and, as we say, no small fools) which yet will be overtaken with it, and thereby lose their credit and reputation with all wise men: yea, do prove themselves to be but swine, and brute beasts: as the Holy Ghost avoucheth, saying, Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging: Whosoever is deceived therein, is not wise. Pro. 20. 1.

Theol. The wise King in the same book, doth most notably and fully describe unto us the inconveniences and mischiefs which do accompany drunkenness, and follow drunkards at the heels. To whom (saith he) is wo? to whom is alas? to whom is strife? to whom is babbling? to whom are wounds without cause? to whom is the redness of the eyes! Even to them that tarry long at the wine; to them that go and seek out mixt wine. In the same Chapter hee Pro. 23. 29.

Pro. 23 20, 21. saith, Be not of the number of them which are bibbers of Wine, or of them which glut themselves with flesh; for the drinker and the feaster shall become poor; & the sleeper shall be cloathed with rags. **Moreover he saith,** Pro. 23. 33. Their eyes shall behold strange women; and that they shall be like him that lyeth in the midst of the Sea, & sleepeth in the top of the mast. **In all these speeches the holy Ghost doth in most lively manner, describe unto us the properties of drunkards; even their staggering, their reeling, their snoring, their restless sensuality. Behold then, what be the cursed fruits and events of drunkenness: Even these which follow, woe, alass, grief, misery, beggery, poverty, shame, lusts, strife, babbling, brawling, fightings, quarreling, sorketing sickness, diseases, swinish sleeping, security & sensuality. See then I conclude that drunkenness is a vice more becoming an hog, then any reasonable man. And as one saith, It is the Metropolitan City of all the Provinces of vices.** Well therefore saith the Heathen writer, When the wine is in, a man is as a running coach without a coachman. Demo. Olinth.

Phil. Let us hear what executions have been done upon drunkards in former ages, that now men may learn to take heed by their examples.

Theol. Amnon, **one of** Davids **ungracious children, being drunk, was slain by his brother** Absolom. Benhadad, **King of** Syria, **being drunk, was discomfited by** Ahab, **King of** Israel. Elah, **King of** Israel, **being drunk, was slain by** Zimri **his servant, and** 2 Sam. 13. 29. 1 King. 20. 20. 1 King. 16. 10.

cap-

captain of his Chariots; who also succeeded him in the kingdom. Lot being drunk, committed incest with his own daughters; & therefore was punished in his posterity. Thus we see what executions have ben done even upon kings, for this kind of sin. Therefore let men learn once at last to shun vice, & embrace vertue; & as the Apostle saith, to make an end of their salvation with fear & trembling. For all our shifts & starting-holes will serve us to no purpose in the end, but when we have fisked hither & thither never so much yet at the last, we must be fain to be shut up in Gods wrath. Gen. 19 37.

Antil. What, I pray you, do you make it so great a matter if a man be a little overtaken with drink now and then? There is no man but hee hath his faults: and the best of us all may be amended. If neighbours meet together now and then at the Ale-house, and play a game at Maw for a pot of Ale, meaning no hurt: I take it to be good fellowship, and a good means to encrease love amongst neighbours; and not so hainous a thing as you make it.

Theol. I see you would fain make fair weather of it, and smooth over the matter with sweet words as though there were no such great evil in it. But howsoever you mince it, and blanch it over, yet the Apostle saith flatly, that Drunkards shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. I think this one sentence is enough to amaze and strike through the hearts of all drunkards in the world: for it is as much in effect, as if the Apostle had said; All drunkards 1 Cor. 6. 10.

are notorious reprobates & hell-hounds; branded of Satan, and devoted to perpetual destruction and damnation.

But you say, you mean no hurt. I answer; Whatsoever you mean, your actions are naught, and your fellowship as bad. For what good meaning can you have, or what good fellowship call you it, for poor labouring men, artificers, and such like, to sit idle all the day long, in Taverns, and Ale-houses, mis-spending their time, and their money, in gaming, rioting, swearing, staining, swilling, bezzelling, bibbing, brawling and brabling? There is no true fellowship in it; it is meer impiety, if we may call it impiety; for poor men to live idlely, dissolutely, neglecting their callings, while their poor wives and children sit crying at home for bread, being ready to starve, to beg or to steal. I pray you speak your conscience, what good fellowship is there in this?

Antil. Yet for all that, there be some which abstain from Ale-houses, and yet are as bad as any other. For they will back-bite and slander their neighbours; they will do them a shrewd turn, as soon as any other; they are envious, they censure us, and disdain our company, yet we think our selves as good as they, for all their shews of holiness.

Theol. You speak more then you know or can justifie, against some better then your self. But if it were so, you should not justifie one sin by another, a lesser by a greater; which is to no purpose.

Antil. Will you then condemn all good fellowship? Theol.

Theol. No, no: I do greatly allow godly and Christian fellowship and acknowledge it to be one of the chiefest comforts we have in the world. I know we are commanded to love brotherly fellowship But as for your pot-companionship, I hate it, and abhor it: for it is written, He that followeth the idle, shall be filled with poverty. And again, He that keepeth company with banqueters, shameth his Father. And in another place, He that loveth pastime, shall be a poor man; and he that loveth wine and oyl shall not be rich. 1 Pet. 2. 17. Pro. 28. 19. Pro. 28. 7. Pro. 21. 17.

Phil. Good Mr. *Theologus*, talk no more with him, but let us draw near to the winding up of this matter; and tell us, in a word, which be the chief causes of drunkennesse.

Theol. The causes are these:

Ill company.	Idlenesse.
Ale-houses.	A wicked humour.

causes of drunkennesse.

Phil. Which be the remedies?

Theol. The remedies are these:

Avoiding of evil company.
Shunning of Ale-houses.
Labouring in your callings.
A good course of life.

Remedies for drunkennesse.

Phil. Well Sir, you have waded far enough in this point: Let us now come to the eighth sign of condemnation, which is idlenesse.

Theol. Concerning idlenesse, this I say briefly: that it is the mother of all Vice, and the step-dame of all Vertue: yea, it is the very bel-dame of all enormities. It is the mother of whoredome, the mother of pride, the mother of theft, the mother of drun-

drunkenness, the mother of ignorance, the mother of errour, the mother of poverty, the mother of slandering and backbiting, prating and gossipping, drawing, scolding, quarrelling: and what not? Idleness was one of the principal sins of Sodom, as the Prophet Ezekiel testifieth saying, Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her, and in her Daughters. Salomon is very plentiful in this matter: For saith he, The sluggard lusteth and hath nought. And again, The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit, then seven men that can give a sensible reason: That is, he taketh himself the wisest of many, because he spareth his body, when others take pains: he saith, Yet a little sleep, yet a little slumber, yet a little folding the hands: and his poverty cometh like a Traveller; that is, unawares: and his necessity like an armed man; That is, strongly. Then he fouldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh. For, He hideth his hand in his bosom, and it grieveth him to put it to his mouth again.

Ezc. 16 49.

Pro. 13. 4.

Pro. 26. 16.

Pro. 24. 33.

Eccl. 4. 5.

In another place the Holy Ghost saith, The sloathful man will not plough because of Winter: therefore he shall beg in Summer, and have nothing. Again, The sloathful man is brother to him that is a great waster.

Pro. 26. 15.

Pro. 18 9.

Moreover, it is said, that the sluggard turns himself upon his bed, as the door doth upon the hinges: That is, he keepeth his bed as if he were fastned to it.

Pro. 26. 14.

And because the Spirit will abound in this

this point, it is further written of the sloathful man, that he saith, An huge Lyon is in the way: I shall be slain in the streets: That is, when any good matter is in hand, (as preaching, praying, reading, giving to the poor, &c.) then he draweth back, he shrinketh into the shell, he findeth one let or other, one excuse or other. Then profit and pleasure, businesse and idlenesse, matters at home, and matters abroad, company, and a thousand occasions will lye in his way, as so many Lyons, to let and hinder him. So then we see how lively and plentifully the holy Scriptures do paint out the lazy lubbers of this world, and sons of idlenesse, which are as hardly drawn to any good thing, as a bear to the stake. As for the duties of Religion, they go as lively and as chearfully about them, as a theef goeth up the Ladder to be executed for his theft. Pro. 26. 13.

Phil. I do plainly see, that this sin of idlenesse is a very gross evil, and the root of many vices; yet for all that, there be a great number which think they were born to live idlely, as many young Gentlemen, and such like; which imagine they came into the world for no other purpose, but to hunt and hawke, card and dice, riot and revel, and so spend their daies in pleasure and vanity. Again, there bee many lazie Lozels, and Iuskish Youths, both in Towns and Villages, which do nothing all the day long but walk in the streets, sit upon the stalls, and frequent Taverns and Ale-houses. Many rich Citizens, especially women, do

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ordinarily lye in bed till nine of the clock, and then forsooth rise, and make themselves ready to go to dinner. And after they have well dined, they spend the rest of the day, and a good part of the night also, in playing, prating, babbling, cackling, prating and gossipping: fie on this idle life. Many profane serving-men also do falsly suppose, that they were born only to game, riot, swear, whore, ruffle it and roist it out, and to spend their time in meer idleness. But of all these, well said the Heathen Philosopher, *Illos pariter indignantur & dii & homines, quisquis otiosus:* Both God and men do hate the idle person.

Arist.

Theol. **It is a lamentable thing to see so many men & women live so idely and so unprofitably as they do. For alas, there be too many which follow no honest calling, live to no use, no body is the better for them: they do no good, neither to the Church or Commonwealth: they are like Drone-Bees; they are unprofitable burdens of the earth. God hath no use of them; the Church no good, the Commonwealth no benefit; their neighbours no profit; the poor no relief. They imagine they came into the world to do nothing but eat, drink and sleep, and rise up to play: they think they should spend their time in dicing and dancing, in whoredome and bravery, in gluttony, and belly-cheer, in making themselves like Hogges of Epicurus Heard, in pampering their paunches, and cramming their bellies: in fatting themselves like Boars in a Frank, till they**

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be well brawned and (as Job saith) till their bones run full of marrow, their faces strout with fatness, and they have collops in their flank. Oh, what a beastly life is this! Fie upon it, fie upon it. It is more met for Epicures, than Christians; for swine, than for men; for Sardanapalus and Heliogabalus, and such like belly-gods, than for the Professors of the Gospel. But of all such, Job saith enough, They spend their daies in pleasure, and suddenly go down to hell. Job 15. 27. Job 21. 13.

Phil. But may it not be allowed unto Lords and Ladies, Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, and other great ones, to live idlely, sith they have wherewith to maintain it?

Theol. God doth allow none to live idlely; but all great and small, are to be employed one way or other: either for the benefit of the Church or Commonwealth; or for the good government of their own households; or for the good of Towns and Parishes, and those amongst whom they do converse; or for the succour and relief of the poor; or for the furtherance of the Gospel, and the maintenance of the ministry; or for one good use or other. To these ends, our wits, our learning, our reading, our skill, our policy, our wealth, our health, our wisdom and authority, are to be referred: knowing this, that one day we shall come to give an account of our Stewardwick, and to be reckoned withal for the employments of our Talents. For this cause Job saith, that, Man is born to travel, as the sparks flie upward. And God hath Job 5. 7.

Gen. 3. 19. hath laid this upon Adam and all his posterity, In the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread. Some do set down four causes why every man should labour diligently in his calling.

First, to bear the yoke laid upon all mankind by the Lord.

Secondly, to get the necessaries of this life.

Thirdly, to live to the profit of humane society.

Lastly, to avoid evil thoughts and actions.

St. Paul findeth great fault with some in the Church of Thessalonica, because they walked inordinately, that is, idely, and out of a lawful calling, and therefore concluded, That such as would not labour, should not eat. So then, we do plainly see, that God alloweth idleness in none. For when we are idle, (as hath been shewed before) we lye open to the Devil, and his temptations, and he gets within us, and prevaileth against us: while David tarryed idely at home in the beginning of the year, when Kings used to go forth to the battel, he was soon overtaken with those two foul sins of Adultery and Manslaughter. So long as Sampson warred with the Philistines, he could never be taken or overcome: but after he gave himself to idleness and pleasure, he not onely committed Fornication with the Strumpet Delilah, but also was taken of his enemies, and his eyes miserably pulled out. These examples do shew what

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a dangerous sin idleneſſe is. Therefore the Holy Ghost sends us to Schoole to the little Creature, The Ant, to learn of her both to avoid idleneſſe, and also to use wisdom and Providence in our actions: Go to the Pismire, O sluggard, behold her wayes, and be wise: For she, having no guide, Prov. 6. 6. task-master, nor ruler, prepareth her meat in the Summer, and gathereth her food in the Harveſt. And in good sooth, it is wonderful to observe what infinite pains, and unwearied labour, this silly Creature taketh in Summer, that she may be well provided for against Winter. Let us therefore learn wisdome from her example: and let us set before our eyes, the Looking-glaſs of all Creatures. Let us consider how the Birds flye, the Fishes swim, the Worms creep, the Heavens turn, the Elements move, the Sea ebbeth and floweth unceſſantly: yea, the earth it self, which is the most heavy and unwieldy creature of all other, yet never ceaseth his working, bringeth forth his burden in Summer, and labouring inwardly all the Winter, in concocting and digesting his nourishment for the next spring. Thus we see how all creatures are diligently and painfully exercised in their kinds. And therefore it is a great shame for us to live idely, carelesly, and dissolutely. Let us therefore learn once (at last) to fly sloath, and every one to live faithfully, diligently, and industriously in our several callings. So shall we both keep Satan at the staves end, and also much sin out of our

souls, which otherwise idleneſſe will force in upon us.

Phil. I must needs confeſs that idleneſs is a groſs vice in whomſoever it is found. But especially, in my judgement, it is moſt odious in *Magiſtrates* and Miniſters.

Theol. That is so in truth. For they ought to be the guides, governours, shepherds, and watch-men over the people of God. And therefore for them to neglect their duties and charges, is a moſt horrible thing, ſith it concerneth the hurt of many. Therefore well ſaid the Heathen Poet, A Magiſtrate or Miniſter may not be lazy or loathful to whom the nurſing of the people is given in charge, and of whom many things are to be cared for.

Hom. 1. 2.

What a lamentable thing therefore is it, when Magiſtrates are prophane, irreligious, popiſh, vicious and negligent in the duties of their calling? And how much more lamentable is it, when Miniſters neglect their ſtudies, ſlack preaching, and prayer, and give up themſelves, ſome to covetouſneſs, ſome to pride, ſome to husbandrie, ſome to other worldly affairs, and ſome to ſpend their time idely in Taverns, Ale-houſes, gaming, rioting, and lewd company? Woonde to God therefore that both theſe kinds of publick perſons would caſt off idleneſſe and ſloath, and with diligence faithfulneſſe, care and conſcience perform the duties of their places. For it is an excellent thing for any to be a good man in his place: As a good Magiſtrate that ruleth well, that governeth

with

wisely, which favoureth good men, and good causes: and defendeth them: which also setteth himself against bad men and causes, and punisheth them sharply and severely: which moreover maintaineth vertue, even of a very love he beareth unto it in his heart: and punisheth vice, of a very zeal and hatred against it: and not for his credit onely, or to please some, or because he must needs do it, and can do no lesse, or for any such sinister respect; but even of a love to God, a care of his glory, a conscience of duty, and a fervent zeal against sin. So likewise it is a notable thing for a Minister to be a good man in his place, to be studious in the Law of God, diligent and painfull in preaching; and that out of a love of God, a zeal of his glory, deep pity and compassion toward the souls of the people, seeking by all means possible to win them unto God; carrying himself in all his actions amongst them, wisely, religiously unblamably, and inoffensively. So again, it is a worthy thing to be a good rich man, which hath much good with his riches, which keepeth a good house, relieveth the poor, ministreth to the necessities of the Saints, and giveth chearfully and with discretion, where need is. So also it is a commendable thing to be a good neighbor, a good towne-man, by whom a man may live quietly, peaceably, joyfully and comfortably.

And lastly, to be a good poor man: that is, humble, lowly, dutiful, painful, ready to help,

holy, and ready to please. Oh, I say, this is a most excellent and glorious thing, when every man keepeth his standing his range, and his rank; when all men, with care and conscience, perform the duties of their places: when the husband doth the duty of an husband; and the wife of a wife: when the Father doth the duty of a father; and the childe of a childe: when the master doth the duty of a master; and the servant of a servant: when every man setteth God before his eyes, in doing those things which especially belong unto him. For herein consisteth the honour of God, the glory of the Prince, the Crown of the Church, the fortresse of the Common-wealth, the safety of Cities, the strength of Kingdoms, and the very preservation of all things.

Asun. You have said well in some things: but yet I do not see, but that rich men and women may live idlely, sith they have enough wherewithal to maintain it. For may not a man do with his own what he list?

Theol. No verily. For you may not take your own knife, and cut your own throat with it: neither may you take your own fire, and kill your own childe with it. Therefore that reason is naught. Albeit therefore wealthy men and women have great plenty of all things, so as they need not labour, yet let them be profitably employed some way or other: let them exercise themselves in one good thing or other. If they can find nothing to do, let them give themselves much to private

prayers,

prayers, and reading of the Scriptures, that they may be able to instruct and exhort others. Or else let Ladies and Gentlewomen do as that good woman Dorcas did, that is, buy cloath, cut it out, work it, sew it, make shirts smocks, coats, and garments, and give them to the poor, when they have so done. For it is said of Dorcas, that she was a woman full of good works, and almes-deeds which she did. She was a merciful and tender-hearted woman, she was the poor mans friend, she cloathed the poor and naked, she knew it was a sacrifice acceptable to God. Oh that the wealthy women of our Land, would follow the example of Dorcas! But (alas) these dayes bring forth few Dorcases. Act. 9. 36.

Phil. As you have shewed us the causes of the former evils: so now, I pray you, shew the causes of this also.

Theol. The causes of idleness are,
Evil examples.
Bad education.
Living out of a calling. *Causes of idleness.*

Phil. Shew us also the remedies.

Theol. The remedies are,

Good education.	Good examples.
Labor in youth	Diligence in a lawful calling

Remedies against idleness

Phil. Now then let us come to the last sign of damnation, which is oppression. And I beseech you, good Sir, speak your mind of it out of the Scriptures.

Theol. It is so infinite a matter, that I know not where to begin, or where to make an end of it. It is a bottomless sink of most grievous enormities. I shall enter into

into a Ladyzineh, where I shall not know how to get out again. But sith you are desirous to hear something of it, this I say, That it is a most cruel monster, a bloody vice, a most ugly and hideous fiend of hell. The Scriptures in very many places do cry out upon it, arraigning it, adjudging it, and condemning it down to hell. They do also thunder and lighten upon all those which are stained and corrupted with this vice, calling them by such names, and giving them such titles, as are taken off from the effects of this sin, and most fit for oppressours: as namely, that, They grinde the faces of the poor; that, They pluck off their skins from them, and their flesh from their bones: that, They eat them up as they eat bread. Those are they which strive to devour all, (like sabage beasts) and to get the whole earth into their hands either by hook or by crook, by right or by wrong; by oppression fraud and violence: these Caterpillers and Cosmogants of the earth, are like unto the Whale-fish, that swalloweth up quick other little fishes: they are like a Lyon, that devoureth other beasts: they are like the Falcon, which setzeth, plumeth and preyeth upon other fowls: these greedy Wolves devour all, and swallow up the poor of the Land: therefore the Prophets of God do thunder out many great woes against them.

Isa. 3. 15. Mic. 3. 2. Psa. 14. 4.

First, the Prophet Esay saith, chap. 5. 8. Wo unto them that joyn house to house, and field to field, till there be no place for the

poor

poor to dwell in, that they may be placed by themselves in the midst of the earth.

Secondly, the Prophet Jeremy **saith,** Wo unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousnes, and his chambers without equity. Jer. 22. 13.

Thirdly, the Prophet Micah **saith,** Wo unto them that covet fields, and take them by violence; and so oppresse a man and his house, even a man and his heritage. Mic. 2. 2.

Fourthly, the Prophet Habbakkuk **cryeth out, saying,** Wo unto him that buildeth a Town with blood, and erecteth a City by iniquity. Hab. 2. 12.

Saint James **also most terribly threatneth these kind of men, saying,** Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your Gold and Silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Jam. 5. 1, 3.

Lastly, S. Paul **saith flatly, that** Extortioners shall not inherit the kingdome of God. **Thus we see, how many fearful woes and threats are denounced from heaven against the pestilent cut-throats of the earth.** 1 Cor. 6. 10.

Phil. And all little enough. For they are steeped in their sin, and the stain of it is soked into them, as it will hardly ever be washed out. True it is that you said, that these cruel oppressing blood-suckers are the most pernitious and pestilent vermine that creep upon the face of the earth; and yet I think there were never more of them then in these daies. For now the wicked world is full of such as do sundry waies bite, pinch, and nip the poor, as we see by every days lamentable experi-

experience. But you can ſpeak more of it then I: therefore I pray you lay open the ſundry kinds of oppreſſion uſed in theſe dayes.

The ſundry kindes of oppreſſions

Theol. **There is oppreſſion by uſury: Oppreſſion by bribery: Oppreſſion by racking of Rents: Oppreſſion by taking exceſſive Fines: Oppreſſion in bargaining: Oppreſſion in letting of Leaſes: Oppreſſion in letting of houſes. Oppreſſion in letting of grounds. Oppreſſion in binding poor men to unreaſonable Covenants: Oppreſſion in thruſting poor men out of their houſes: Oppreſſion in hiring poor mens houſes over their heads: Oppreſſion in taking offices: Oppreſſion by Lawyers: Oppreſſion by Church-Officers: Oppreſſion by engroſſers: Oppreſſion by foreſtallers: Oppreſſion of the Church: Oppreſſion of the Miniſtry: Oppreſſion of the poor: Oppreſſion of Widowes: Oppreſſion of Orphans**

And thus we ſee how all ſwarms with Oppreſſions; and nothing but Oppreſſions, Oppreſſions.

Phil. In truth, this is a moſt cruel and oppreſſing age wherein we live; yea, a very Iron age. It ſeems that the great ones mind nothing elſe: they are altogether ſet upon oppreſſion; they dote and dream of it, they find ſweet in it, and therefore they are mad of it: As *Salomon* ſaith Oppreſſion maketh a wiſe man mad. It ſeems therefore, that this vice is of ſuch marvellous force, that it can bereave men of their wits, and make them ſtark mad of getting goods by hook or by crook, they care not how, nor from whom,

ſo

so they have it. Yet no doubt the most wise God hath enacted many good Laws for the suppressing of this evil, and threatneth the execution of them in his own person: and especially his Law doth provide for the safety of the poor, the fatherless, the widow, and the stranger. But you, Master *Theologus*, can repeat the Statutes better then I, because you are a professed Divine: therefore *I* pray you, let us hear them from you.

Theol **In the 22 chapter of** Exodus, **God made this Law following:** You shall not trouble any widow or fatherless childe: If thou vex or trouble such, and so he call and cry unto me, I will surely hear his cry. Then shall my wrath bee kindled, and I will kill you with the sword: and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

Again he saith, Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is needy and poor: but thou shalt give him his hire for his day; neither shall the Sun go down upon it (for he is poor, and therewith sustaineth his life) lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee. Deut. 24. 14, 15.

Moreover the Lord saith, Thou shalt do no injury to a stranger; for yee were strangers in the Land of *Egypt*. Exod. 22. 21.

And GOD himself threatneth, That he will bee a swift witnesse against those which keep back the Hirelings Wages, and vex the widdow and the fatherlesse. Mal. 3. 5.

The Apostle saith, 1 Thes. 4. 6. Let no man oppress or defraud his brother in any matter. For the Lord is an avenger of all such things. Eccl. 5. 8. Salomon **also saith,** If in a Coun-

try thou seest the oppression of the poor, and the defrauding of justice and judgement; be not astonied at the matter: for he that is higher then the highest regardeth, and there be higher then they. **All these holy Statutes and Laws, enacted and provided against oppressors, do plainly shew what care the Lord hath for his poor, distressed, and desolate people.**

Phil. But these oppressing hell-hounds, are such as care for nothing. No Law of the Almighty can bridle them; nothing can fear them; nothing can restrain them; they have made a covenant with hell and death. They are frozen in their dregs, they are past feeling. And as *Job* saith, These are they that abhor the light; they know not the wayes thereof, neither continue in the paths thereof. Their hearts are as hard as the Adamant. Nothing can move them, nothing can work upon them. There is great crying out every where of the stone in the reins, which indeed is a great torment to the body. But there is no complaining of the stone in the heart, I mean a stony heart, which is the sorest disease that possibly can fall into the soul of a man; and yet in these times it groweth very rife. For mens hearts are as hard as brass, and as the nether Mill-stone, as the Scripture speaketh. For many, especially of these unmerciful and oppressing Tyrants, say in their hearts, God will do neither good nor evil. Therefore they put the evil day far from them, and approach to the seat of iniquity. They are at ease in *Sion*; they lye upon beds of Ivory, and stretch

Iob 24. 13.

Amos 6. 3.

ſtretch themſelves on their beds, and eat the Lambs of the flock, and the Calves out of the ſtall. They ſing to the ſound of the Viol: they invent inſtruments of muſick, like *David:* they drink Wine in bowls, and no man is ſorry for the afflictions of *Joſeph:* that is, the troubles of Gods People. The Prophet *Eſay* alſo complains of theſe kinde of men, ſaying, They regard not the work of the Lord, neither conſider the work of his hands. And another Prophet ſaith, They ſay in their hearts, God hath forgot, he hides away his face, and will never ſee. They are ſo proud, that they ſeek not for God. They think alwaies there is no God: his judgements are far out of their ſight, their waies alway proſper, and therefore they ſay in their hearts, Tuſh, we ſhall never be moved, nor come in danger.

Amos. 6. 5, 6.

Iſa. 5. 12,

Pſa. 10. 11.

Theol. **You have ſpoken very well touching the ſtéelineſſe and hardneſs of theſe mens hearts, who are ſo unmercifull to their poor neighbours, that almoſt none can live by them. They do ſo diſturb and diſquiet all things, that poor men can dwell in no reſt by them. Therefore truly ſaith the wiſe King,** A mighty man moleſteth all, and both hireth the fool, and hires thoſe that paſs by: but the poor man ſpeaketh with prayers: **That is, by the way of entreaty and ſupplications. For the poor are afraid of them: they quake when they ſee them, as the beaſts quake at the roaring of a Lyon. Many poor Farmers, poor Husbandmen, poor Herds, poor Labourers, poor Widdows and Hire-**

lings, do quake and tremble when these greedy wolves come abroad. And, (as Job saith) The poor of the earth hide themselves together. For (alas! in their hearts they cannot abide the sight of them) they had as leeve meet the devil as meet them, for fear of one displeasure or another. For either they fear that they will warn them out of their houses, or parley about more rent, and straiter covenants, or beg away their best kine, or borrow their horses, or command their carts, or require a weeks work of them, and never pay them for it, or a twelvemonths pasture for a couple of Geldings, or that they'l make one quarrel or another unto them, one mischief or another. So that these poor souls cannot tell what to do, or which way to turn them, for fear of these cruel Termagants. They are even weary of their lives. For they have no remedy for these things, but even to bear it off with head and shoulders: therefore they often wish they were out of the world, and that they were buryed quick. They say, if any will knock them on the head, they will forgive him. O most piteous case! O lamentable hearing! These poor silly creatures are fain to drudge and moil all the year long, in Winter and Summer, in frost and snow, in heat and cold, to provide their Rents, that they may be able to pay their cruel Landlord at his day. For else how shall they be able to look him in the face? Yet their rent is so rack't, that all they can do is little

Job 24. 4.

enough to pay it; and when that is paid, (alas!) the poor man and his wife, and children have little left to take to, or to maintain themselves withal; they are fain to gnaw of a crust, to fare hardly, and go thinly clad. Sometimes they have victuals, sometimes none. The poor children cry for bread. Poor widdows also, and poor fatherlesse children, are found weeping & mourning in their houses, & in their streets. So that now we may with Salomon, Turn and consider all the oppressions that are wrought under the Sun. Thee may behold the tears of the oppressed, and none comforteth them. For the mighty ones do wrong the weaker, even as the stronger beasts do push and harm the feebler. These griping Oppressours do pinch the poor even to the quick. They pluck away from the fatherlesse and widows that little which they have. If there be but a cow, or a few sheep left, they will have them. If there bee a little commodity of House or Land, Oh what devices they have to win it in, & to wring it away! These tyrants will go as nigh as the bed they lye upon. They know well enough, the poor men are not able to wage law with them; and therefore they may do what wrong they will, and shew what cruelty they list. Hence come the tears of the oppressed; hence cometh the weeping and wailing of the poor. But, alas, poor souls! they may well weep to ease their hearts a little; but there is none to comfort them: remedy they can have none. But yet, Eccl. 4. 1.

assuredly, the everlasting God doth look upon them, and will be revenged. For the cryes of the poor, the fatherlesse and the widdows, have entred into the eares of the Lord of Hosts, who is an avenger of all such things; yea a strong revenger, as Salomon saith, Enter not into the field of the fatherless, for their Revenger is strong; he himself will plead their cause against thee. And again hee saith, Rob not the poor, because hee is poor; neither tread down the afflicted in the Gate: for the Lord pleadeth their cause, and will spoil their soul that spoil them. We see then, that the most just God will be revenged of these unmerciful Tyrants. Hee will not alwaies put up these wrongs and injurys done to the poor.

Pro. 23. 14.

Pro. 22. 22.

In the eighth Chapter of the Prophet Amos, he swears by the excellency of *Jacob*, that he will never forget any of their works. And again he saith by his Prophet Jeremy, Shall I not be avenged on such a Nation as this?

Surely hee will set his face against them, to root them out of the earth. For indeed they are not worthy to crawl upon the face of the earth, or to draw breath among the Sons of men. It is written in the book of Psalms, that God would set these fellows, opposite against him, as a Butt to shoot at: that he will put them apart, and the strings of his Bow shall hee make ready against their faces. Bee astonished at this, O ye heavens; and tremble, O thou earth. Hear this, O ye cruel Land-Lords, unmerciful Oppressors, and Blood-

Psa. 21. 12.

Blood-suckers of the earth. You may well be called Blood-suckers: For you suck the blood of many poor men, women, and children; you eat it, you drink it, you have it served in at your sumptuous Tables every day, you swallow it up, and live by it. And, as Job saith, The wilderness gives you and your children food: that is, you live by robbing and murdering. Job. 24. 5. But wo, wo unto you that ever you were born. For the blood of the oppressed, which ye have eaten and drunken, shall one day cry for speedy vengeance against you, as the blood of Abel cryed against Cain. Their blood shall witnesse against you in the day of judgement: and the tears of many poor starved children, orphans and widows, shall cry out against you. Was the Lord revenged of Ahab for his cruel and unjust dealing with poor Naboth, and shall he not be revenged of you? Did dogs lap the blood of Ahab, and shall you escape? No, no: you shall not escape. The Lord will be a swift witnesse against you, as he saith in Malachy. Was the Lord angry with the rich of the people for oppressing the poor, so as the cry of the people, and of their wives, against their oppressors, was heard of the Almighty) and do you think you shall escape scot-free? Doth not the like cause bring forth the like effect? the like sin, the like punishment? Know therefore for certainty, that the Lord hath coffers full of vengeance against you, and one day he will unlock them, and bring them forth in the sight of all men. 1 King. 21. Mal. 3. 5. Neh. 5.

Know also that the timber of your houses, and the stones of your walls, which you have built by oppression and blood, shall cry against you in the day of the Lords wrath, as the Prophet Habakkuk telleth you. The stone (saith hee) shall cry out of the wall; and the beam out of the timber shall answer. Where the Prophet telleth you, That the walls of your houses built in blood, shall cry out loud and shrill, and play the Chorysters in that behalf, so as they shall answer one another on either side. The one side singeth, Behold blood; the other, Behold murder. The one side, Behold deceit: the other, Behold cruelty. The one, Behold pilling and polling; the other, Behold covetousness. The one, Behold robbery; the other, Behold perjury. And thus you see how the stones and timber of your houses shall bee scant upon you. And howsoever you put on you brazen brows, and harden your hearts against these threatnings of the most terrible God and Lord of Hosts, yet one day you shall (in spite of your hearts, will ye, nill ye) be brought forth into judgement; you shall once come to your reckoning; you shall at last bee apprehended, convicted, and arraigned at the Bar of Gods Tribunal Seat, before the great Judge of all the world. Then sentence shall pass against you, even that most dreadful sentence, Go yee cursed into hell fire, there to be tormented with the devil and his angels for ever. O then, wo, wo unto you: For what shall it profit a man to win

Hab. 2. 11.

Mat. 25 41.

win the whole world, and loose his own soul? saith our Lord Jesus. Surely, even as much, as if one should win a farthing, and lose an hundred thousand pounds. For if he shall be cast into hell fire which hath not given his own goods righteously gotten, as our Saviour abouncheth; where then shall he be cast, that hath stollen other mens goods? And if he shall bee damned that hath not cloathed the naked; what shall become of him that hath made naked them that were cloathed? Oh, therefore repent in time, O ye cruel Oppressours: seek the Lord while hee may be found, call upon him while he is near, lay aside your sabage cruelty; visit the fatherlesse and widdow in their distress; deal your bread to the hungry; help them to their right which suffer wrong: deal mercifully with your Tennants: rack not your rents any more; pinch not the poor soules, for whom Christ dyed: pity them, I say, but pinch them not: deal kindly and friendly with them: remember your great accounts: consider the shortnes of your days, and the vanity of your life: rent your hearts and not your cloaths: Turn unto the LORD with all your heart, with weeping, wailing, and mourning: prevent GODS wrath with a sacrifice of teares: pacifie his anger with the calves of your lips: and with a contrite spirit: Bee grieved for that which is past, and amend that which is to come: stand it out no more at the sword's point against God: for it will not boot

bout you to strive; he is too strong for you. Your onely wisdome is to come in. Come in therefore, come in, ye rebellious generation: submit your selves to the great King: humble your selves under his mighty hand; cast down your swords and targets: yeild unto our God. So shall you escape the vengeance to come: so shall God accept you, have mercy upon you, receive you to favour, grant you a general pardon for all your rebellions, and admit you into the number of his faithful and loyal subjects.

Phil. I conceive by divers speeches which you have alledged, that goods got by oppression and cruelty, will never prosper long. For oppressors coin their mony upon their neighbours skins, how then can it be blessed?

Theol. You have spoken a truth. For, as it hath been shewed before, that those goods which are got by swearing and lying, are cursed; so all those that are got by oppression and violence are more cursed. Therefore the Lord saith by his Prophet Jeremy, As the Partridge gathers the young which she hath not brought forth; so he that gathers riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his dales; and at his end, shall be a fool, and his name shall be written in the earth. Ier. 17. 11.

Phil. Would to God our Magistrates and Governours would take speedy order for remedying these things, and for the redressing of such grievous enormities as are amongst us; or that they themselves would step in and deliver the oppressed from the hand of the oppressour.

Theol

Theol. Job was an excellent man for such matters. For it is said of him, that Hee brake the jaws of the unrighteous man, and pluckt the prey out of his teeth: where wee see how Job was a means to deliver the innocent, and to pull the Lamb out of the Lyons claws. Moreover, it is written of him in the same Chapter, that the blessing of him that was ready to perish, came upon him, and that hee caused the widdows heart to rejoyce; that he was the eye to the blind, the feet to the lame, and the father to the poor: and when hee knew not the cause, he sought it out diligently. O what a notable man was this! O that we had many Jobs in these dates! Wise Salomon doth most gravely advise us all to follow Job's example in this behalf. Deliver (saith hee) them that are oppressed and drawn to death: for shouldst thou withdraw thy self from them which go down to the slaughter? would to God this counsel were well weighed and practised among us. Iob 29. 17. Job 29. 13. Pro. 24. 12.

Phil. I marvel much with what face these cruel oppressours, can come before God in his holy Temple to pray, and offer up their sacrifices unto him. For wee see, many of them, though they have such foul hands, and foul hearts, as we have heard; yet for all that, will most impudently presume to come to the Church and pray: or at least, when they are laid in their beds at nights, and half asleep, then will they mumble over their prayers, or be pattering some Pater-nosters.

Theol. Alas, alas, poor soules! all that they

they do in matters of Gods worship, is but hypocrisie and dissimulation. For in truth they are not for God, they love him but from the teeth outward: their mouths are with him, but their heart goes after covetousnes, and their hands are full of blood. And therefore God doth both abhor them and their prayers. For, saith he, Isa. 1. 15. Though they stretch out their hands, yet will I hide mine eyes from them: and though they make many prayers, yet will I not hear them. For their hands are full of blood.

Pro. 28. 9. Moreover, the Holy Ghost saith, He that turns away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer is abominable. David Psa. 66. 18. saith, If I regard wickednes in my heart, God will not hear my prayer. Our Lord Joh. 9. 31. Jesus also affirmeth, that God hears not sinners: that is stubborn and careless sinners. So then, we may clearly see (by all these testimonies of holy writ) what account God makes of the prayers of oppressors, and all prophane and ungodly men: namely, that he doth hate them and abhor them as loathsome and odious in his sight.

Phil. Now in conclusion, shew us the causes of oppression.

Causes of oppression

Theol. The Causes are these:

Cruelty.	An evil conscience.
Covetousness.	
Hard-heartedness.	The Devil.

Remedies of oppression.

Phil. Let us hear also the remedies.

Theol. The remedys be these:

Pity.	A good conscience.
Contentation.	Much prayer.
Tender affections.	

Phil.

Phil. Now, Sir, you have at large uttered your mind concerning these grosse corruptions of the world, and have plainly and evidently proved them to be the deadly poyson of the soul: so also, I pray you, satisfie us in this, whether they be not hurtful also to the body, goods, and name.

Theol. **I have dwelt the longer in these common Vices of the world, because almost all sorts of men are stained with one or other of them: and therefore they can never be enough spoken against. For the whole world lyeth in them, as S. John testifieth. If men therefore could be recovered of these diseases, no doubt there would be a ready passage made for the abundance of grace; and we should have a most flourishing Church and Commonwealth: but as long as these do lie in the way, there is small hope of greater mercies and blessings to be poured upon us; or that ever we shall come to have an inward Conversation with GOD. For these Vices blind our eyes, burthen our hearts, and (as the Prophet Jeremy saith, Jer. 5. 25.) hinder good things from us. But touching your Petition: I must needs grant, That as these Vices are the very bane of the soul, and most certain Signs of Condemnation: so are they very dangerous to the Body, Goods and Name: yea, and to the whole Land, both Church and Commonwealth.**

1 Ioh. 5. 19.

Jer. 5. 25.

Phil. Shew us out of the Scriptures what danger they bring to the body.

Theol. **The Lord our God saith, That if wee will not obey him, nor keep his Commandments, (but break his covenant) hee will appoint over us hasty plagues, consumptions, and the burning**
Lev. 26. 16. **Ague, to consume the eyes, and to make the heart heavy. So also he saith, That if we will not obey his voyce, to observe all his Commandments and Ordinances, that then he will make the Pestilence cleave unto us, until he have consumed us:**
Deut. 28. 21 **that he will smite us with the fever, with the botch of Egypt, with the emrods, with the Scab, and with the Itch, that also he will smite us with madness, and with blindness, and with astonishment of heart. So then you see what great evils the Lord threatens to inflict upon our bodys in this life, for these and such like sins. But on the contrary, the Holy Ghost**
Prov. 3. 7, 8. **saith,** Fear God, and depart from evil: so health shall be to thy navel, and moisture to thy bones,

Phil. What evil do these forenamed sins bring upon us in our goods and outward estate?

Theol. **They cause God to curse us in all that we set hand unto, as plentifully appeareth in the fore-named Chapter:**
Deut. 28. 17. **where the Lord saith thus:** If thou wilt not obey the commandments of the Lord thy God, cursed shalt thou be in the town, cursed also in the field; cursed shall be thy basket and thy store; cursed shall bee the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy Land, and the encrease of thy kine, and the flocks of thy

thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed also when thou goest out. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, trouble, and shame, in all that thou settest thy hand unto. **And further he saith,** That he will break the staff of their bread; that ten women shall bake their bread in one oven, and they shall deliver their bread again by weight, and they shall eat, and not be satisfied. **You do therefore apparently see, that these sins will draw down Gods wrath upon us, and all that we have.** Levit. 26 26.

Phil. What hurt do those sins to our good name?

Theol. **They bring reproach, shame and infamy upon us, and cause us to be abhorred and contemned of all good men. They do utterly blot out our good name. For as vertue makes men honourable and reverend, so vice makes men vile and contemptible. This is set down where the Lord threatens** Israel, **that for their sins and disobedience, he will make them a Proverb and common talke; yea, a reproach and astonishment among all people. In sundry other places of the Prophets he threatens, for their sins, to make them a reproach, a shame an hissing, and nodding of the head to all Nations.** 1 King. 9. 7. Ezek. 5 15.

Phil. I do verily thus think, that as sin generally doth stain every mans good name, which all are chary and tender of: so especially it doth blot those which are in high places, and of special note for learning, wisdome and godlines.

Theol. **You have spoken most truly, and**

agreeable to the Scriptures. For the Scripture saith, As a dead flie causeth the Apothecaries oyntment to stink: so doth a little folly him that is in estimation for wisdom and for honour. Where Salomon saith: That if a flie get into the Apothecaries box of oyntment, and dye, and putrifie in it, she marreth it: though it be never so precious: even so, if a little sin get into the heart, and break out into the forehead of a man of great fame, for some singular gifts, it will blur him, though he be never so excellent.

Ecclef. 10. 1.

Phil. Shew me this I pray you more plainly.

Theol. We observe this, in all experience, that if a noble man be a good man, and have many excellent parts in him of courtesie, patience, humility and love of Religion; yet if he be covetous, the common people will have their eye altogether upon that man, and they will say, Such a man is a very good man, but for one thing; he is exceeding covetous, oppresseth poor men, and dejecth hardly with his Tenants, keepeth no house, doth little good in the Country where he dwelleth. And this is it that marreth all.

Moreover, let a Iudge, a Iustice, or a Magistrate, be endued with excellent gifts of prudence, policy, temperance, liberality, and knowledge in the Law: yet if they be given to anger, or taking of bribes. Oh how it will disgrace them amongst the people! for they will say, He is a worthy man indeed, but there is one thing in him, that marreth all: he is an

exa-

exceeding angry and furious man, he is as angry as a wasp, hee will bee in a pelting chafe for every trifle: he will fret and fume if you do but blow upon him. And besides this, he is a very corrupt man: hee is a great taker of bribes: he loveth well to bee bribed: hee will do any thing for bribes.

Furthermore, if any Preacher be a man of great gifts, the Common people will say of him: Oh, hee is a worthy man indeed, an excellent Scholler, a profound Divine, a singular man in a Pulpit: but yet for all that, hee hath a shrewd touch which marreth all; hee is an exceeding proud man: he is as proud as Lucifer. Hee hath very great gifts indeed, but I warrant you hee knoweth it well enough. For hee carryeth his crest very high, and looketh very sternly and disdainfully upon all other men. Hee is unmeasurably puft up with over-weening, and thinketh that hee toucheth the clouds with his head. Thus therefore we see, how the dead flies mar all, and how some one sin doth disgrace a man that otherwise doth excel.

Phil. What is the cause why some one sin doth so blot & smut the most excellent men?

Theol. The reason hereof is, because such men are as a candle set on a candlestick, or rather upon a scaffold or mountain, for all men to behold & look upon. And sure it is, they have a thousand eyes upon them every day, & that not only gazing on them, but also prying very narrowly into them, to spy out the least mote; that they may make a mountain of it. For, as in a clean

white paper one little spot is soon espyed, but in a piece of brown paper, twenty great blurs scant discerned: Even so in Noblemen, Judges, Magistrates, Justices, Preachers and Professors, the least spot or speck is soon seen into; but among the baser sort, and most gross livers, almost nothing is espyed or regarded.

Phil. Sith the eyes of all men are bent and fixed upon such men as are of some note, therefore they had need very heedfully to look to their steps, that they may take away all advantage from them that seek it.

Theol. Yes verily: and furthermore, they had need to pray with David always, Psa. 119 133. Direct my steps O Lord in thy Word; and let no iniquity have dominion over mee. Psa. 41. 12. And again, Order my goings, that my foot-steps slip not: uphold mee in my integrity. For if such men be never so little given to swearing, to lying, to drink, or to women, it is espyed by and by: and therewithal their credit is cracked, their fame overcast, their glory eclipsed, and the date of their good name presently expired.

Phil. Now as you have shewed what great hurt these sins do bring upon our souls, bodies, goods and name: so also, I pray you, shew what danger they bring upon the whole Land.

Theol. Questionless, they pull down the wrath of God upon us all, and give him just cause to break all in pieces, and utterly to subvert and overthrow the good estate both of Church and Common-wealth; yea, to make a final consumption

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on and desolation of all. For they be the very fire-brands of Gods wrath, and, as it were touch-wood to kindle his anger and indignation upon us. For the Apostle saith, For such things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Col. 3. 6.

Phil. Declare unto us out of the Scriptures, how the Lord in former times hath punished whole Nations and Kingdoms for these and such like sins.

Theol. In the fourth of Hosea, the Lord telleth his people, that he hath a controversie with the Inhabitants of the Land, (and the reason is added) because there was no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land. By swearing, lying, killing, stealing, and whoring, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the Land mourn; and every one that dwelleth therein shall be cut off. Hos. 4. 1.

Here then we see what it is that will incense God against us, and cause us all to mourn. So likewise the Lord threatneth by his Prophet *Amos*, that for the cruelty and oppression of the poor, he would plague the whole Land. Shall not the Land tremble for this, (saith the Lord) and every one mourn that dwells therein? Amos. 8. 8.

Again, the Lord saith by the Prophet Jeremy, Do they provoke mee to anger, and not themselves to the confusion of their own faces? Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, mine anger and my wrath shall bee poured upon this place, upon man and beast, upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and not be quenched. Jer. 7. 19, 20.

Jer. 22. 5. **Again, the Lord saith,** If ye will not hear these words, I swear by my self, (saith the Lord) that this house shall be waste, and I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons, and they shall cut down thy chief Cedar-trees, and cast them into the fire.

Ezek. 5 7, 8. **Likewise the Lord threatneth by his Prophet** Ezekiel, **saying,** Because you have not walked in my statutes, nor kept my judgments: therefore, behold, I, even I, come against thee, and will execute judgment in the midst of thee, even in the sight of the Nations; and I will do in thee that I never did before, neither will I do any more the like, because of all thine abominations. For in the midst of thee, the Fathers shall eat their Sons, and the Sons shall eat their Fathers. **Again, by the same Prophet the Lord saith,** The Land is full of the judgement of blood, and the City full of cruelty. Wherefore I will bring the most wicked of the Heathen; and they shall possess their houses. I will also make the pomp of the mighty to cease, and the holy places shall be defiled. When destruction cometh, they shall seek peace, and not have it. Calamity shall be upon calamity, and rumour upon rumour. Then shall they seek a vision of the Prophet: but the Law shall perish from the Priest, and counsel from the Ancient. The King shall mourn, and the Prince shall bee cloathed with desolation, and the hands of the people in the Land shall be troubled: I will do unto them according unto their waies, and according unto their judgement

Ezek. 7 23, to 27

I will judge them: and they shall know that I am the Lord. **Last of all, the Lord saith by his Prophet** Jeremy, Hear O earth: Behold, I will cause a plague to come upon this people, even the fruit of their own imaginations, because they have not taken heed to my words and to my Law, but cast it off. Jer. 6. 19. **Almost innumerable places to this purpose, are to be found in the writings of the Prophets: but these may suffice to prove the main point, to wit: that the just God doth punish whole Nations and Kingdoms for the sins and rebellions thereof.**

Phil. Sith all these sins (for the which the Lord did execute such universal punishments upon his own people) do abound, and overflow the Land, may we not justly fear some great plague to fall upon us? and the rather, because our transgressions do increase dayly, and grow to a full height and ripeness; so as it seems, the harvest of Gods Vengeance draweth near, and approacheth?

Theol. **We may indeed justly fear and tremble. For if God spared not the Angels that sinned, how shall he spare us? If he spared not his own people, what can we look for? If he spared not the natural branches, how shall he spare us that are wild by nature? are we better then they? Can we look to be spared, when they are punished? are not our sins as many, and as great as theirs? Doth not the same cause bring forth the same effect? Is the Arm of the Lord shortned? Or is not God the same just God to punish sin now, that**

that he was then? Yes, yes, assuredly. And therefore we have great cause to mourn and lament, to quake and tremble, because there is a naked sword of vengeance hanging over our heads. Thus did Jeremy, thus did Amos, thus did Habakkuk, when they plainly saw the imminent wrath of God approaching upon the people of Israel and Judah.

Ier. 4. 19. Amos 5 16. Hab. 3. 16.

Phil. I think we may the rather doubt and fear, because the punishment of these forenamed vices is neglected by the Magistrate. For commonly when they that bear he sword of justice, do not draw it out to punish notorious offenders and malefactors, the Lord himself will take the matter into his own hands, and be revenged in his own person: which is most dreadful and dangerous. For it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Heb. 10. 31.

Theol. You have spoken a truth. For if those which are Gods Deputies and Vicegerents in the earth, do their duties faithfully in punishing vice, and maintaining vertue; in smiting the wicked, and favouring the godly: then assuredly evil shall be taken out of Israel, Gods wrath prevented, and his judgements intercepted: as it is written, Phineas stood up and executed judgement, and the plague was stayed. But if they (for fear, favor, affection, gain, flattery, bribery, or any other sinister respect) will be so spating and remiss in punishing of gross offenders, and be rather ready to smite the righteous, then do they exceedingly pro-

Ps. 106. 30.

voke

voke Gods wrath against the Land, and against themselves.

Phil. One thing I do greatly lament: that there bee either none at all, or very slender censures, either by the Civil or Ecclesiastical Authority, for divers of these fore-named vices: as pride, covetousnes, oppression, lying, idleness, swearing, &c.

Theol. It is a thing to be lamented indeed. For where do we see a proud man punished, a covetous man punished, an oppressour punished, a swearer punished, a liyer punished, an idle person punished? Now, because they know they cannot, or shall not be punished, therefore they are altogether hardned, and imboldned in their sins; as the wise man saith: Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the children of men are fully set in them to do evil.

Phil. One thing I do much muse at, wherein also I desire to be further satisfied, *viz.* what is the cause, that under so Godly a Prince, so many good laws, and so much good preaching and teaching, there should notwithstanding bee such an excess and overflowing of sin in all estates?

Theol. The causes hereof are divers and manifold. But I will nominate four especial ones in my judgement: The first is, mans natural corruption; which is so strong, as almost nothing can bridle it. The second is, ill presidents, and external provocations to evil. The third is, the want of teaching in many congregations in the Land: by reason whereof, many know

know not sin to be sin. The last reason is, the corruption and negligence of some such as are in authority.

Phil. Doth not this inundation and overflowing of sin, with the impunity of the same, prognosticate great wrath against us?

Theol. Yes undoubtedly, as it hath in part been shewed before. And there be divers other presages of wrath, though not of the same kind, which be these. Unthankfulnesse for the Gospel: The abuse of our long peace: Our secret Idolatries: Our generall security: Our ripenesse in all sin: Our abuse of Gods mercy: Our abuse of his long patience: The coldnesse of Professors: Our not profiting by former judgements: as pestilence, famine, death, and the shaking of the sword.

Nine Predictions, or foresigns of wrath.

Phil. This last I take to be a special token of approaching vengeance: that wee have not profited by former warnings.

Theol. True indeed. For it is an ordinary thing with God, when men will not profit by milde corrections, and common punishments, then to lay greater upon them. And when a former trouble doth us no good, we are to fear a final consuming trouble. For so we read in the prophecy of Hosea, that at the first God was to *Ephraim* as a moth, and to *Judah* as rottennesse: but afterward, when as they profited not by it, hee was to *Ephraim* as a Lyon, and to *Judah* as a Lyons whelp. So the Lord saith in another place, That if they will not come in, and yeild obedience at the first call of his wrath, then hee will

Hos. 5. 12.

dis-

punish them seven times more: but if they continue in their stubbornesse, then he threatneth to bring seven times more plagues upon them, according to their sins. If by all these they would not be reformed, but walk stubbornly against him, then hee threatneth, Yet seven times more for their sins: and the fourth time, Yet seven times more. The proof hereof we have in the Book of the Judges: where we read how the people of Israel for their sins were in subjection to the King of Aram-Naharaim eight years: afterward because they profited nothing by it, but returned to their old sins, therefore they served Eglon King of Moab eighteen years. After that again, for their new sins and provocations, the Lord gave them up into the hands of Midian seven years. After all this, for the renewing of their sins, the Lord sold them into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites, which did grievously vex and oppresse them for the space of eighteen years. Last of all, we read, that when neither famine nor pestilence could cause them to return unto him, then he delivered them up to the Sword of their enemies, and held them in Bondage and Captivity threescore and ten years. After all this, when they were delivered out of Captivity, and returned home safely to their own Nation, and enjoyed some good time of peace and rest, yet at last, they fell to the renewing of their sins: and therefore the Lord plagued them most grievously by the divided Greek

Lev. 26 18.
Ver. 21.
Ver. 24.
Ver. 28.
Jud. 3. 8
Jud. 3. 14.
Jud. 6. 1.
Jud. 10. 7, 8.

Ezek. 38.

Empire, even Magog **and** Ægypt, Seleucia **and** Lagidæ, **and that by the space almost of three hundred years. And this is it that the Prophet** Hosea **did foretell, that** Hos. 3. 4. the children of *Israel* should remain many daies without a King, and without a Prince; without an Offering, and without an Image, without an Ephod, and without a Teraphim.

Phil. You have very largely laid open this last token of vengeance: to wit, that God at the first doth but beat us upon the coat; but if we continue in sin, he will whip us on the bare skin: and if men will not yeild at the first gentle strokes, then he will strike harder and harder, till he have broken our stout stomacks, and made our great hearts come down. Therefore it is good yeilding at the first: for we shall get nothing for our sturdiness against him. We do but cause him to double his strokes, and strike us both sidelong and over-thwart: for he cannot endure that wee should grumble against him with stubborn sullenness. But now to the point. Sith there are so many presages and foresigns of Gods wrath, I pray you, shew what it is that stayeth the execution, and very downfall of the same.

Theol. **The prayers and tears of the faithful, are the special means that stay the hand of God from striking of us. For the prayers of the righteous are of great force with him: even able to do all things.** Iam. 5. 16. **St.** Iames **saith, That** the prayer of a righteous man availeth much, if it bee fervent: **and bringeth the example of** Elias **to prove it. For saith he,** Though Elias

was

was a man subject to the like passions that we be, yet was he able by his prayers both to open and shut the Heavens. Abraham likewise prevailed so far with God by his prayers for Sodom, that if there had been but ten just men found in it, it had been spared. The Almighty God saith by his Prophet, Though *Moses* and *Samuel* stood before mee, yet mine affection could not be toward this people. which doth plainly shew that Moses and Samuel might have done much with him, had hee not been so fully bent against his people for their sins as hee was. So likewise hee saith in the Prophesie of Ezekiel, Though these three men, *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job*, were amongst them, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousnes. which also sheweth, that if they had been any possible entreating him for the Land, these three men might have done it, but now he was resolutely determined to the contrary. In respect therefore that the zealous Preachers, and true Professors of the gospel, do so much prevail with God by their prayers, they are said to be the defence and strength of Kingdoms and Countries, of Churches and Commonwealths as it is said of Elijah, that he was the Chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof; Elisha also was environed with a mountain full of horses and Chariots of fire. And sure it is, that Elijah and Elisha are not onely the Chariots and Horsemen of Israel, but also by their prayers they do cause God himself to be a wall of fire round about

Gen. 18 32.

Ier. 15. 1.

Ezek. 14. 14.

2 King. 2. 12. 2 King. 6. 17.

it: as the Lord saith by his Prophet: I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before mee for the Land, that I might not destroy it: but I found none. Which sheweth, that if there had been but some few to have stood in the breach, hee would have spared the whole Land. This also appeareth more plainly in the Prophesie of Jeremy, where the Lord saith thus: Run to and fro by the streets of Jerusalem; behold and enquire in the open places thereof, if you can find a man, or if there bee any that executeth judgement, and seeketh the truth, and I will spare it. Oh then mark and consider, what a man may do: yea, what one man may do: what an Abraham may do: what a Moses may do: what an Eliah may do: what a Daniel, what a Samuel, what a Job, what a Noah may do!

Ezek. 22. 30.

Ier. 5. 1.

Some one man (by reason of his high favor with the Eternal) is able sometimes to do more for a Land by his Prayers and Teares, then many prudent men by their counsel, or valiant men by their Swords. Yea, it doth evidently appear (in the sacred Volume of the Holy Ghost) that some one poor Preacher, being full of the Spirit and power of Eliah, doth more in his Study, (either for offence, or defence: either for the turning away of Wrath: or the procuring of Mercy) then a Camp-Royal, even forty thousand strong: yea, (as the Spirit speaketh) Though they all have their swords girded

Cant. 3. 7.

ded to their thighs, and be of the most valiant men of *Israel*. And this is clearly proved in one verse of the book of Psalms, where the Prophet, having reckoned up the sins of the people, addeth, Therefore the Lord was minded to destroy them, had not *Moses* (his chosen) stood in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest hee should destroy them. See therefore what one man may do with God. Some one man doth so binde the hands of God, that when he would strike, hee hath no power to do it: as it is said of Lot, I can do nothing till thou be come out. See how the Lord saith, He can do nothing, because he will do nothing: hee doth wittingly, and willingly suffer his hands to be manacled, and bound behind him, for some few's sake, which hee doth make more account of, then all the world besides; so precious and dear are they in his sight. Likewise it is written, That the Lord was exceedingly incensed against the Israelites for their Idolatrous Calf which they made in Horeb; Yet he could do no thing, because Moses would not let him. And therefore he falleth to entreating of Moses, that Moses would let him alone, and entreat no more for them. Oh (saith the Lord to Moses) Let mee alone, that my wrath may wax hot against this people, and that I may consume them. Thus wee see that except Lot go out of the City, and Moses let him alone, he can do nothing. O the profoundnesse and altitude of Gods mercy toward mankind! O the

Psal. 106. 23.

Gen. 19 22.

Exod. 32. 10

heighth and depth, length and breadth of his mercy toward some! O that the most glorious and invisible GOD should so greatly respect the sons of men! for what is man, that he should be mindful of him; or the son of man, that he should regard him? Let us therefore that are the Lords Remembrancers, give him no rest, nor let him alone, until we have some security, and good assurance from him, that he will turn away from us the wrath which we most justly have deserved; that he will spare us, and be merciful unto us. Yes, as the Prophet saith, Let us never leave him, nor give him over, till he repair and set up *Jerusalem* the praise of the world: Left for default hereof, that be charged upon us, which was charged upon the head of some of the Prophets in Israel, that they were like the Foxes in the waste places, that they had not risen up in the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel. For now adays (alas) we have many hedge-breakers, few hedge-makers; many openers of gaps, few stoppers; many makers of breaches, to let in the floods of Gods wrath upon us, but very few that by true repentance go about to make up the breach, and to let down the sluces, that the gushing streams of Gods vengeance may be stopp'd and stayed.

Isa. 62. 7.

Ezek. 13. 4, 5.

Phil. I do now plainly see, that there be some in high favor with God, and as we say, greatly in his books: sith his love is so great unto them, that for their sake he spareth thousands.

Theol.

Theol. **It is written in the Proverbs of** Salomon, **that the righteous in a Land are the establishment of the Kings throne, and the wicked the overthrowing of the same. The words are these:** Take away the dross from the silver, and there will proceed a vessel for the finer. Take away the wicked from the King, and his throne shall be established in righteousness. Pro. 25. 4, 5.

Likewise in another place the wise man **affirmeth, that the righteous are the strength and bulwarks of Citys, Towns and Corporations: but the wicked are the weakning and undoing of all.** Scornful men (**saith he**) set a City on fire: but the wise turn away wrath. Pro. 29. 8.

To this purpose, most excellent is that saying of Eliphas **in** Job, The innocent shall deliver the Island, and it shall bee preserved by the pureness of their hands. Iob. 22. 30.

We read in the book of the Chronicles, **that when the Levites and the Priests were cast out by** Jeroboam, **they came to** Jerusalem, and all such **as set their hearts to seek the Lord God** of Israel came with them. **And then afterward it is said, they strengthned the Kingdom of** Iudah, **and made** Rehoboam **the son of** Salomon **mighty. By all these testimonies it is evident, that Princes, Kingdoms, Citys, Towns and Villages, are fortified by the righteous therein: and for their sakes also great plagues are kept back. Which thing one of the Heathen did well see into; as appeareth by his words, which are these:** When God meaneth well to a City, and will do it good, then he raiseth up good men: but when he meaneth to punish

2 Chro. 11. 14, 16, 17.

nish a City or a Country, and do ill unto it, then he taketh away the good men from it.

Phil. It is very manifest, by all that you have alledged, that the wicked fare the better every day in the year, for the righteous that dwell amongst them.

Theol. All experience doth teach it, and the Scriptures do plentifully avouch it. For did not churlish Laban fare the better for Iacob his kinsman? Doth he not acknowledge that the Lord had blessed him for his sake? Did not Potiphar fare the better for godly Ioseph? doth not the Scripture say, That the Lord blessed the Egyptians house for Ioseph his sake? and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand? Did not Obed-Edom fare the better for the Ark? Did not the seventy and six souls that were in the Ship with Paul, speed all the better for his sake? Did not the Angel of God tell him in the night, that God had given unto him all that sailed with him? for otherwise a thousand to one they had been all drowned. Therefore the children of God may very fitly be compared to a great piece of cork, which though it be cast into the Sea, having many nails fastned in it, yet it beareth them all up from sinking, which otherwise would sink of themselves. What shall we say then? or what shall we conclude, but that the ungodly are more beholden to the righteous then they are aware of?

Gen. 30 27.

Gen. 39 5.

2 Sam 6. 11

Act. 27 24.

Phil. I do think if it were not for Gods children, it would go hard with the wicked.

For

For if they were sorted and shoaled out from amongst them, and placed by themselves, what could they look for but wrath upon wrath, and plague upon plague, till the Lord had made a final consumption, and swept them like dung from the face of the earth?

Theol. **Sure it is, all Creatures would frown upon them. The Sun would unwillingly shine upon them, or the Moon give them any light. The Stars would not be seen of them, & the Planets would hide themselves. The beasts would devour them. The fowls would pick out their eyes. The fishes would make war against them, and all Creatures in Heaven and Earth, would rise up in arms against them. Yea, the Lord himself from Heaven, would rain down fire and brimstone upon them.**

Phil. Yet for all this, it is a wonder to consider how deadly the wicked hate the righteous, and almost in every thing oppose themselves against them, and that in most virulent and spightful manner. They rail and slander, scoff and scorn, mock and mow at them, as though they were not worthy to live upon the earth. They esteem every pelting Rascal, and prefer every vile Varlet before them. And though they have their lives and liberty, their breath and safety, and all that they have else by them; yet for all that, they could bee content to eat their heart with garlick: so great, so fiery, so burning and hissing hot is their fury and malice against them.

Theol. They may very fitly be compared to a Moth that fretteth in pieces the same cloth wherein she is bred: or to a certain worm or canker, that corrodeth or eateth thorow the heart of the Tree that nourisheth her: or unto a man that standeth upon a bough in the top of a Tree, where there is no more, and yet with an Ax choppeth it off and therewithal falleth down with it, and breaketh his neck: Even so the fools of this world do what they can to chop asunder the bough that upholds them, but they may know easily what will follow.

Phil. I see plainly they be much their own foes, and stand in their own light; and indeed know not what they do. For the benefit which they receive by such, is exceeding great; and therefore by their maligning of them, they do but hold the stirrop to their own destruction.

Theol. Now to apply these things to our selves, and to return to the first question of this argument: may we not marvel that our Nation is so long spared, considering that the sins thereof are so horrible and outragious as they be?

Phil. We may justly marvel at the wonderful patience of God: and wee may well think that there be some in the Land which stand in the breach, being in no small favour with his Highness, sith they do much prevail.

Theol. The merciful preservation of our most gracious King, who is the breath of our nostrils, the long continuance of our peace, and of the Gospel, the keeping back of

of the sword out of the Land, which our sins pull upon us, the frustrating of many plots and subtil devices which have been often invented against our State, yea, and the life of his Majesties most Royal Person, make me to think, that there be some strong pleaders with God for the publick good of us all.

Phil. You may well think so indeed: for by our sins we have forfeited, and dayly do forfeit into Gods hands, both our King, our Country, our Peace, our Gospel, our Lives, our Goods, our Lands, our Livings, our Wives, our Children, and all that we have: but onely the righteous (which are so near about the King, and in so high favour) do step in, and earnestly intreat for us, that the forfeitures may be released, and that we may have lease (in parley) of them all again, or at least a grant of further time. But, I pray you, Sir, are not we to attribute something concerning our good estate to the policy of the Land, the Laws established, and the wisdome and counsel of our prudent Governours?

Theol. Yes assuredly, very much, as the ordinary and outward means which God useth for our safety. For though the Apostle Paul had a grant from God for the safety of his own life, and all that were with him in the ship; yet he said, Except the Marriners abide in the ship, we cannot be safe. Shewing thereby, that unto faith and prayers the best and wisest means must be joyned. We are therefore upon our knees every day to give thanks unto God for such good means of our safety as he hath given us. *Phil.*

Act. 27. 31.

Phil. Well then, as the prayers of the righteous have been hitherto great means both for the hindering and turning away of wrath, and the continuance of favour; so shew, I pray you, what is the best course to bee taken, and what in sound wisdome is to bee done, both to prevent future dangers, and to continue Gods Favours and mercies still upon us.

Theol. **The best and surest course that I can consider or conceive of, is, To repent heartily for sins past, and to reform our lives in time to come; to seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near; to forsake our own ways, and our own imaginations, and to turn unto him with all our hearts, with weeping, with fasting, and with mourning, as the Prophet** Joel chap. 2. adviseth: For our God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evill. **All the Prophets do counsel us to follow this course, and do plainly teach, that if we all (from the highest to the lowest) do meet the Lord with unfeigned repentance, and offer him the sacrifice of a contrite spirit, undoubtedly he will be pacified towards us, and be mercifull to our transgressions. This is most plainly set down in the seventh Chapter of** Jeremy, **where the Lord saith thus to his people.** If you amend and redress your waies, and your works: If you execute judgement betwixt a man and his neighbour, and oppress not the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, and

Jer. 7. 5, 6.

shed

shed no innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods, to your destruction, then will I let you dwell in this place, even in the Land which I gave unto your fathers for ever and ever. **So likewise he saith by the same Prophet**, Execute yee judgement and righteousnes, and deliver the oppressed from the hand of the oppressour, and vex not the fatherless, the widow, or the strangers; do no violence, nor shed innocent blood in this place. For if you do this thing, then shall the King, sitting upon the throne of *David*, enter in by the gates of this house, and ride upon Chariots, and upon Horses, both hee and his servants, and his people. Jer. 22. 3, 4, 5.

And again, O yee disobedient children, return and I will heal your rebellion, **The Lord also saith by his Prophet** Isaiah, If yee consent and obey, yee shall eat the good things of the Land: but if yee refuse, and bee rebellious, yee shall bee devoured with the sword. For the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. Jer. 3. 22. Esa. 1. 19.

The Prophet Hosea saith, Come, let us return to the Lord; for hee hath spoiled, and he will heal us; hee hath wounded us, and he will binde us up. Hos. 6. 1.

And again, Hos. 13. 1. O *Israel*, return unto the LORD, (for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity) and I will heal thy rebellion, and will love thee freely: for mine anger is turned away from thee. I will be as the dew unto *Israel*: hee shall grow as the Lilly, and fasten his root as the trees of *Lebanon*. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the Olive-tree, and his smell as *Lebanon*.

The

The Prophet Micah telleth us what is good for us, and what is our best course, & what the Lord requireth at our hands, namely, these four things. To do justice, to love mercy, to humble our selves, and to walk with our God. The Prophet Amos giveth the same counsel, saying, Seek the Lord, and ye shall live. Seek good, and not evil. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgement in the gate. It may be that the Lord of Hosts will be merciful unto the remnant of *Joseph*. And the Lord himself saith, If this Nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their wickedness, I will repent of the plague I thought to bring upon them. Thus we do plainly see what advice and counsel the Prophets and holy men of God do give unto us. The summ of all is this, that if we do truly repent, and turn unto him with all our hearts, (studying to obey him, and walk in his ways) then he will grant us any favor that we will require at his hands. For even as a wool-pack, or other soft matter, beateth back, and dampeth the force of all shot; so penitent, melting, and soft hearts, do beat back the shot of Gods wrath, and turn away his vengeance from us. Moreover, we may observe, in all experience, that when Potentates are offended, or any great man hath conceived a displeasure against some poor man, then he must run and ride, send presents, use his friends, break his sleep, and never be quiet untill he have pacified him. Even so must we deal with our God, seeing he hath taken

Mic. 6. 8.

Amos 5. 3. 14, 15.

Jer. 18. 8.

ben a displeasure against us. Oh therefore that we would (speedily) use all possible means to pacifie his wrath! O that we would with our heart and voyce every one of us (from the highest to the lowest) humble our selves before our God, for take our former evil ways, be grieved for that we have done, and purpose never to do the like again! Oh that it might go to the hearts of us, that we have so often and so grievously offended so loving a God, and so merciful a Father! Oh that we would awake once at last, and rowse up our drowsie hearts, and ransack our sleepy consciences, crying out against our sins, that our sins might never cry out against us! Oh that we would judge our selves, accuse our selves, indite our selves, and condemn our selves! so should we never be adjudged, accused, indited, or condemned of the Lord. Oh that all hearts might sob, all souls might sigh, all loyns might be smitten with sorrow, all faces gather blackness, and every man smite himself on the thigh, saying, What have I done? Oh that both Magistracy, Ministry, and Commonalty, would purpose and vow, and even take a bond of themselves, that from henceforth, and from this day forward, they would set their hearts to seek the Lord, and wholly give up themselves to his obedience! Oh that all men, women and children, would fear God, and keep his commandments; would eschew evil and do good: would study to please God in all things, and to be fruitful in

all

all good works, making conscience to perform the duties of their general callings and duties of their special callings; duties of the first table, and duties of the second table; that so God might be sincerely worshipped, his Name truly reverenced, his Sabbaths religiously observed; and that every man would deal kindly, mercifully, justly, and uprightly with his neighbour, that there might be no complaining, no crying in our streets! Oh, I say, again and again, that if all of us, of what estate, degree, or condition soever, would walk in the paths of our God, then doubtless we should live and see good days, all future dangers should be prevented, our peace prolonged, our State established, our King preserved, and the Gospel continued. Then should we still enjoy our lives, our goods, our lands, our livings, our wives, our children, our houses and tenements, our orchards and gardens; yea, as the Prophet saith, we shall eat the good things of the Land, spend our days in much comfort, peace and tranquility, and leave great blessings unto our children and posterity, from age to age, from generation to generation.

Phil. You have fully answered my question, and well satisfied me therein out of the Scriptures; yet, I pray you, give mee leave to add one thing to that which you have at largest set down. The Lord saith by the Prophet *Amos*, that for their sins and rebellions, he had given them cleanness of teeth, that is, dearth and scarcity; and yet

Amos 4. 6, 7.

yet they did not turn unto him. Alſo he withheld the rain from them, and puniſhed them with drought; and yet they did not turn unto him. Moreover, he ſmote their corn, their great gardens, their Orchards, Vineyards, Fig-trees, and Olive-trees, with blaſting and mildew, and the Palmer-worm did devour them: and yet they did not return unto him. Laſt of all, he ſmote them with peſtilence, and with the ſword, and overthrew them, as he overthrew *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and they were as a firebrand pluckt out of the burning: yet for all this, they did not turn unto him. Yee have not turned unto me, ſaith the Lord. But now to come to the point. Out of this I gather, that if we multiply our tranſgreſſions, God will multiply his plagues upon us: but on the contrary, if we would unfeignedly turn unto the Lord our God with all our hearts, all plagues ſhould be ſtayed, all dangers prevented, and no evil ſhould fall upon us. For becauſe they would not turn, therefore he ſmote them. If therefore they had turned, he would not have ſmote them. But now, I pray you, briefly conclude this point, and declare in few words what it is that doth moſt materially concern our peace and publick good.

Theol. **Theſe few then briefly I take to be the things which belong to our peace.**
Let Salomon **execute** Joab **and** Shimei.
Let Achab **and** Eliah, **ſlay the Prieſts and Prophets of** Baal.
Let Aaron **and** Eleazer **miniſter before the Lord faithfully.**

Ten things concerning our peace.

Let

Let Jonas be cast out of the Ship.
Let Moses stand fast in the gap, and not let down his hand.
Let Ioshua succeed him.
Let Cornelius fear God with all his houshold.
Let Tabitha bee full of good works and almes deeds.
Let Deborah Iudge long in Israel, prosper and be victorious.
Let us pray that the light of Israel may not bee quenched.
And this I take to be the summ of all that belongs to our peace.

Phil. The sum of all our conference hitherto, as I remember, may be reduced unto these few heads: First, mans natural corruption hath been laid open. Secondly, the horrible fruits thereof. Thirdly, their evil effects and workings, both against our souls and bodies, goods, name, and the whole Land. Lastly the remedies of all. Now therefore I would grow to some conclusion of that which you touched by the way, and made some mention of; namely, the signs of salvation and damnation; and declare unto us plainly, whether the state of a mans soul before God, may not by certain signs and tokens, bee certainly discerned in this life.

Nine signs of a sound soul.

Theol. Besides those which before have been mentioned, we may add these nine following:

Reverence of Gods Name: keeping of his Sabbaths: Truth: Sobriety: Industry: Compassion: Humility: Charity: Contentation. *Phil.*

Phil. These indeed, I grant, are very good signs; but yet all of them are not certain: for some of them may be in the reprobates.

Theol. **What say you then to St Peters signs, set down in the first chapter of his second Epistle: which are these eight.**

Faith: Vertue: Knowledge: Temperance: Patience: Godlinesse: Brotherly kindnes: Love.

St. Peters *Eight signes of Salvation.* 2 Pet. 1. 8.

Saint Peter **saith**, If these be in us and abound, they will make us neither idle nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus, **which is as much, as if he had said, They will make us sound and sincere Professors of the Gospel.**

Phil. All these I grant are exceeding good signs and evidences of a mans salvation; but yet some of them may deceive, and a hole may be picked in some of these evidences; I would therefore hear of some such demonstrative and infallible Evidences, as no Lawyer can finde fault with. For I hold that Divines can as perfectly judge of the assurance and evidences of mans salvation, as the best Lawyer can judge of the assurances and evidences, whereby men hold their lands and livings.

Theol. **You have spoken truly in that. And would to God all the Lords people would bring forth the Evidences of their Salvation, that we might discern of them.**

Phil. Set down then, which bee the most certain and infallible Evidences of a mans salvation; against which no exception can be taken.

Theol.

Theol. I judge these to be most sound and infallible:

Seven infallible signes of salvation.

Assured faith in the promises.
Sincerity of heart.
The Spirit of Adoption.
Sound regeneration & sanctification.
Inward peace.
Soundnesse in the truth.
Continuance to the end.

Act. 16. 31. *Pro.* 1. 20. *Ioh.* 1. 41. *Rom.* 8. 14. *Ioh.* 4. 23. 1 *Thes.* 4. 15. *Rom.* 5. 1. *Col.* 1. 23. *Mat.* 24. 13.

Phil. Now you come near the quick indeed. For in my judgement, none of these can be found truely in any reprobate. Therefore I think no Divine can take exception against any of these.

Theol. No. I assure you, no more then a Lawyer can finde fault with the Tenure of mens lands and fee-simples, when as both the title is good, and strong by Law; and the evidences thereof are sealed, subscribed, delivered, conveyed, and sufficient witnes upon the same, and all other signes and ceremonies (in the delivering and taking possession thereof) according to strict law observed. For if a man have these forenamed evidences of his salvation, sure it is, his title and interest to heaven is good, by the Law of Moses and the Prophets, I mean the Word of God. God himself subscribeth to them: Jesus Christ delivereth them as his own deed: the Holy Ghost sealeth unto them: yea, the three great witnesses, which bear record in the earth, (that is, water, blood, and the spirit) do all witnesse the same.

Phil. Now you have very fully satisfied mee touching this point. And one thing more I do

do gather out of all your speech, to wit, that you do think a man may be assured of his salvation even in this life.

Theol. **I do think so indeed. For he that knoweth not in this life that he shall be saved, shall never be saved after this life.** For St. John saith, Now wee are made the Sons of God. 1 John 3. 2.

Phil. But because many doubt of this, and the Papists do altogether deny it, therefore, I pray you confirm it unto us out of the Scriptures.

Theol. **The Apostle saith.** We know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle bee destroyed, wee have a building given us of God; that is, an house not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens. **Mark that he saith, Both he & the rest of Gods people, did certainly know that Heaven was provided for them. For the Spirit of Adoption beareth witnesse with our spirits, that we are the Children of God. And again, the same Apostle saith,** From henceforth is laid up for mee, the crown of righteousnes, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give mee at that day; and not to me only, but to all them that love his appearing. **Here we see, that he knew there was a crown prepared for him and for the Elect. And the same spirit which did assure it unto Paul, doth assure it also to all the children of God. For they have all the same Spirit, though not in the same measure.** St. John saith also, Herein we are sure we know him, it wee keep his commandments. **In which words** S. John **telleth us thus much, that if** 2 Cor. 5. 1. Rom. 8. 15, 16. 2 Tim. 4. 8. 1 John 2. 3.

we do unfeinedly endeavour to obey God, there is in us the true knowledge and fear of God; and consequently, we are sure we shall be saved. Saint Peter saith, Give
2 Pet. 1. 10. all diligence to make your calling and election sure. Wherefore should the Apostle exhort us to make our election sure, if none could be sure of it? In the second of the Ephesians, the Apostle saith flatly, that in Christ Jesus we do already sit together in heavenly places. His meaning is not, that, we are there already in possession; but wee are as sure of it, as if wee were there already. The Reasons hereof are these: Christ our head is in possession: therefore he will draw all his members unto him, as he himself saith.

Secondly, we are as sure of the thing which we hope for, as of that which we
Ioh. 12. 23. Ioh. 14. 13. have, but we are sure of that which we have, which is the work of grace: therefore we are sure of that we look for, which is the Crown of glory. Many other places of the holy Scriptures might be alledged to this purpose; but, I suppose, these may suffice.

Phil. As you have shewed this by the Scriptures: So also shew it more plainly by evident reason out of the same.

Theol. How can a man in truth call God his Father, (when he saith, Our Father which art in Heaven) and yet doubt whether he is his Father or no? For if God indeed bee our father, and we his children how can we perish: how can we be damned? will a father condemn his own

own Children? shall the children of God be condemned? No, no: There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Rom. 8. 1. Again, Who can lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? it is God that justifieth who can condemn? Rom. 8. 33, 34. It is therefore most certain and sure, that all such as do in truth call God their father, and have God for their father, shall be saved. Again, how can a man say in truth and feeling, that he believes the forgiveness of sins, and yet doubt whether he shall be saved? For if he be fully perswaded that his sins be forgiven, what letteth why he should not be saved? Moreover, as certainly as we know we are called, justified and sanctified: so certainly we know we shall be glorified. But we know the one certainly, and therefore the other.

Asur. I will never believe, that any man can certainly know, in this world, whether he shall be saved or damned, but all men must hope well, and be of a good belief.

Theol. Nay, we must go further then hope well: we may not venture our salvation upon uncertain hopes. As if a man should hope it would be a fair day to morrow: but he cannot certainly tell. No, no, we must in this case, being of such infinite importance as it is, grow to some certainty and full resolution. We see worldly men will be loath to hold their Lands and Leases uncertainly, having nothing to shew for them. They will not stand to the courtesie of their Land-lord, nor rest upon their good wills. They will not

not stay upon uncertain hopes. No, they are wiser then so. For the children of this world are wiser in their generation, then the children of light. They will be sure to have something to shew. They will have it under Seal. They will not stay upon the words and promises of the most honest men, and best Landlords. They cannot be quiet till they have it in white and black, with sound counsel upon their Title and every way made as sure unto them, as any Law of the Land can make it.

Luke. 16 8.

Are then the children of this world so wise in these inferiour things, and shall not we be as wise in matters of ten thousand times more importance? Are they so wise for earth, and shall not we be as wise for heaven? Are they so wise for their bodies, and shall not we be as wise for our souls? Shall we hold the state of our immortal inheritance by hope-will, and have no writings, or evidences, no seal, no witnesses, nor any thing to shew for it? Alas! this is a weak Tenure; a broken Title, a simple hold indeed.

Asun. Yet for all that, a man cannot be certain.

Theol. Yes: Saint John telleth us, wee bee certain. For he saith, Hereby we know we dwell in him, and he in us, because hee hath given us of his Spirit. Hee saith not wee hope; but, we know certainly. For he that hath the Spirit of God, knoweth certainly hee hath it; and he that hath faith, knoweth that he hath faith; and he

1 John 4. 13.

that

that shall be saved, knoweth he shall be saved. For God doth not work so darkly in mens hearts by his Spirit, but that they may easily know whether it be of him or no, if they would make a due tryal. Again, the same Apostle saith, He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: That is, he hath certain testimonies in his own conscience, that he shall be saved. For we must fetch the warrant of our salvation from within our selves; even from the work of GOD within us. For look how much a man feeleth in himself the encrease of knowledge, obedience, and godliness, so much the more sure he is that he shall be saved. Mans own conscience is of great force this way, and will not lye or deceive. For so saith the wise man, As water sheweth face to face, so doth the heart, man unto man: That is, the mind and conscience of every man telleth him justly (though not perfectly) what he is. For the conscience will not lye; but accuse or excuse a man, being instead of a thousand witnesses.

1 Joh. 5 10.

Pro. 27. 19.

The Apostle saith, No man knows the things of man, but the spirit of man that is in him. And again, the Scripture saith, Mans soul is as it were the candle of the Lord, whereby he searcheth all the bowels of the belly. So then it is a clear case, that a man must have recourse to the work of Gods grace within him, even in his own soul: and thereby he shall be certainly resolved one way or other. For even as Rebecca knew certainly by the striving and

1 Cor. 2 11.

Pro. 20. 27.

stirring of the twins in her womb, that she was conceived and quick of child: so Gods children know certainly, by the motions and stirring of the Holy Ghost within them, that they have conceived Christ, and shall undoubtedly be saved.

Phil. I pray you let us come to the ground work of this certainty of salvation, and speak somewhat of that.

Theol. The ground-work of our salvation is laid in Gods eternal election; and, in respect thereof, it standeth fast and immovable; as it is written, The foundation of God standeth fast. And again, He is faithful that hath promised: Though we cannot believe, yet he abides faithful. So then, as we know it certainly in our selves, by the consequence of election: so it standeth most firm in respect of God, and his eternal & immutable decree. And a thousand infirmities (nay, all the sins of the world, nor all the devils in hell) cannot overthrow Gods election. For our Lord Jesus saith, All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me. And again, This is the Fathers will that hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing; but should raise it up again at the last day. And in another place our Saviour Christ saith, My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all: and none is able to take them out of my Fathers hand. We ought

2 Tim. 2. 19. 1 Thes. 5. 24. 2 Tim. 2. 13.

Io. 6. 37.

Ioh. 10. 27.

ought therefore to be as sure of our salvation, as of any other thing which God hath promised, or which we are bound to believe. For to doubt thereof, in respect of Gods Truth, is blasphemous against the immutability of his truth.

Phil. But are there not some doubts, at some times, even in the very Elect, and in those which are grown to the greatest persuasion?

Theol. Yes verily. For he that never doubted never believed. For whosoever believeth in truth, feeleth sometimes doubtings and waverings. Even as the sound body feeleth many grudgings of diseases, which if he had not health, he could not feel: so the sound soul feeleth some doubtings, which if it were not sound, it could not so easily feel. For we feel not corruption by corruption, but we feel corruption by grace. And the more grace we have, the more quick we are in the feeling of corruption. Some men of tender skins, and quick feeling, will easily feel the lightest feather, in softest manner, laid upon the ball of their hands; which others, of more slow feeling and hard flesh, cannot so easily discern. So then it is certain, that although the children of God feel some doubtings at some times, yet the same do no whit impeach the certainty of their salvation; but rather argue a perfect soundness and health of their soule. For when such little grudgings are felt in the soul, the children of God oppose against them the certainty of Gods Truth

and promises, and so do easily overcome them For the Lords people need no more to fear them, then he that rides through the streets upon a lusty Gelding, with his sword by his side, needs to fear the barking and bawling of a few little curs, and whappets.

Phil. Shew yet more plainly how or in what respect the childe of GOD may both have doubtings and yet be fully assured.

Theol. Even as a man set on the top of the highest steeple in the world, and so fast bound unto it, that he cannot fall though he would, yet when he looketh downward, hee feareth, because mans nature is not acquainted nor accustomed to mount so high in the Air, and to behold the Earth so far beneath: but when he looketh upward, and perceiveth himself fast bound, and out of all danger, then he casteth away all care. Even so, when wee look downward to our selves, wee have doubts and fears; but when we look upward to Christ, and the truth of his promises, wee feel our selves cock-sure, and cease to doubt any more.

Phil. Declare unto us what is the original of these doubts and fears, and from whence they spring in the children of God.

Theol. They spring from the imperfection of our regeneration, and from that strife which is in the very mind of the Elect, between faith and infidelity. For these two do mightily fight together in the most regenerate, and strive to over-master and overshadow one another. By reason

reason whereof, sometimes it cometh to passe, through the prevailing of unbelief, that the most excellent Servants of God may fall into fits and pangs of despair, as Job and David in their temptations did. And even in these days also some of Gods children at some times are shrewdly handled this way, and brought very low, even to deaths doore: but yet the Lord in great mercy doth recover them both from total and final despair. Onely they are humbled and tryed by these sharpe fits for a time, and that for their great good. For as we use to say, that an ague in a young man is a sign of health; so these burning fits of temptations in the Elect, for the most part, are signs of Gods grace and favour. For if they were not of God, the Devil would never bee so busie with them.

Phil. Is it not meer presumption, and an over-much trusting to our selves, to bee perswaded of our salvation?

Theol. Nothing lesse. For the ground of this perswasion is not laid in our selves, or any thing within us, or without us, but only in the righteousnes of Christ and the merciful promises of God. For is it any presumption for us, to believe that which God hath promised, Christ hath purchased, and the Holy Ghost hath sealed? No verily, it is not any presumption, but a thing which we all stand bound unto, as we will answer it at the dreadful day of Judgement. As for our selves, we do freely confesse, that in Gods sight

we are but lumps of sin and masses of misery, and cannot of our selves move hand or foot to the furtherance of our salvation. But being justified by faith, we are at peace with God, and fully perswaded of his love and favour towards us in Christ.

Phil. Cannot the reprobates and ungodly be assured of their salvation?

Theol. No. For the Prophet saith, There is no peace to the wicked. Then I reason thus: They which have not the inward peace cannot be assured: But the wicked have not the inward peace, therefore they cannot be assured. Stedfast faith in the promises doth assure. But the wicked have not stedfast faith in the Promises: therefore they cannot be assured. The Spirit of adoption doth assure: But the wicked have not the spirit of adoption; therefore they cannot be assured.

Isa. 57. 21.

To conclude: When a man feeleth in himself an evil conscience, blindnesse, prophanenes, and disobedience, he shall in despight of his heart, sing this doleful song, I know not whether I shall be saved or damned.

Phil. Is not the doctrine of the assurance of salvation a most comfortable doctrine?

Theol. Yes doubtlesse. For except a man be perswaded of the favour of God, and the forgivenesse of sins, and consequently of his salvation, what comfort can he have in any thing? Besides this, the perswasion of Gods love towards us, is the root of all our love and cheerful obedience towards

wards him: For therefore we love him, and obey him, because we know he hath loved us first, and written our names, in the Book of Life. But on the contrary, that general doctrine of the Papists, which would have men alwaies doubt and fear in a servile sort, is most hellish and uncomfortable. For so long as a man holds that, what encouragement can he have to serve God? what love to his Majesty? what hope in the promises? what comfort in trouble? what patience in adversity?

Antil. Touching this point, I am flat of your minde. For I think verily a man ought to be perswaded of his salvation: and for my own part, I make no question of it. I hope to be saved as well as the best of them all. I am out of fear for that. For I have such a stedfast faith in God, that if there should be but two in the world saved, I hope I should be one of them.

Theol. You are very confident indeed, you are perswaded before you know. I would your ground were as good as your vain confidence. But who is so bold as blind Bayard? Your hope is but fancy, and as a sick mans dream. You hope you cannot tell what. You have no ground for what you say. For what hope can you have to be saved, when you walk in no path of salvation? what hope can a man have to come to London speedily, that travelleth nothing that way, but quite contrary? What hope can a man have to reap a good crop of corn, that useth no means, neither ploweth, soweth, nor harroweth?

What hope can a man have to be fat, and well liking of his body, that seldom or never eateth any meat? what hope can a man have to escape drowning, which leapeth into the Sea? Even so, what hope can you have to be saved, when you walk not in that way, when you use no means, when you do all things that are contrary to the same? For (alas!) there is nothing in you of those things which the Scriptures do affirm must be in all those that shall be saved. There be none of the forenamed signs and tokens in you. You are ignorant, profane and careless. God is not worshipped under your roof. There is no true fear of God in your self, nor in your household. You seldom hear the Word preached. You content your self with an ignorant Minister. You have no prayers in your Family, no reading, no singing of Psalms, no instructions, exhortations, admonitions, or any other Christian exercises. You make no conscience of the observation of the Sabbath. You use not the Name of God with any reverence. You break out sometimes into horrible Oaths and cursings. You make an ordinary matter of swearing by your Faith and your Troth. Your wife is irreligious, your children, dissolute and ungracious, your servants profane and careless. You are an example in your own house of all Wherein is conscienceless behaviour. You are a great gamester, a riotour, a spendthrift, a drinker, a common Alehouse-hunter, a whore hunter; and, to conclude,

given

given to all vice and naughtinesse. Now then, I pray you tell me, or rather let your conscience tell me, what hope can you have to be saved, so long as you walk and continue in this course? Doth not S. John say, If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darknes, we are liers? Doth not the same Apostle avouch, that such as say they know God, and kéep not his commandments, are lyers? 1 Joh. 1. 6. 1 Joh. 2. 4.

Again, doth he not say, He that committeth sin is of the Devil? And, Whosoever doth not righteousnes, is not of God? Doth not our Lord Jesus flatly tell the Jews, (which bragged that Abraham was their father) that they were of their father the Devil, because they did his workes? Doth not the Apostle Paul say, His servants wee are to whom wee obey, whether it be of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousnes? Doth not the Scripture say, He that doth righteousnes, is righteous? Doth not our Lord Jesus affirm, that, Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of Heaven, but hee that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven? Therefore I conclude, that forasmuch as your whole course is carnal, carelesse and dissolute, you can have no warrantable hope to be saved. 1 Joh. 3. 8. Rom. 6. 16. 1 Joh. 3. 7. Mat. 7. 21.

Phil. I do verily think that this mans case (which now you have laid open) is the case of thousands.

Theol. Yea, doubtlesse, of thousand thousands, the more is the pity.

Asun. Soft and fair, Sir, you are very

round indeed. Soft fire maketh sweet Malt, I hope you know we must be saved by mercy, and not by merit. If I could do all my self, wherefore serveth Christ? I hope that which I cannot do, he will do for me. And I hope to be saved by Jesus Christ, as well as the best of you all.

Theol. **Oh, now I see which way the game goeth. You would fain make Christ a cloak for your sins. You will sin that grace may abound. You will sin frankly, and set all upon Christs score. Truly, there be many thousands of your mind, hearing of Gods abundant mercy in Christ; are thereby made more bold to sin. But they shall know one day to their cost, what it is to abuse the mercy of God. The Apostle saith,** The mercy and loving kindness of God, should lead us to repentance. **But we see it leads many to further hardness of heart. The Prophet saith,** With him is mercy, that hee may be feared. **But many are thereby made more secure and carelesse. But to come nearer to the mark: You say you hope to bee saved by Jesus Christ. I answer, if those things be found in you which the Scripture avoucheth to be in all that shall bee saved by him, then you may have good confidence, and assured hope, otherwise not. Now the Scriptures do thus determine it, and set it down, that if a man bee in Christ, and look to be saved by him, he must bee endued with these qualities following:**

Rom. 2. 1.

Ps. 130. 4.

2 Cor. 5. 17.

1. **He must be a new creature.**

2. He must live, not after the lusts of men, but after the will of God, 1 Pet. 4. 2.
3. He must be zealous of good works, Tit. 2. 14.
4. He must dye to sin, and live to righteousness, Rom. 6. 14.
5. He must be holy & unblamable, Col. 1. 22.
6. He must so walk as Christ hath walked, 1 John 2. 6.
7. He must crucifie the flesh with the affections and lusts, Gal. 5. 24.
8. He must walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, Rom. 8. 1.
9. Last of all he must serve God in righteousness and true holiness all the dayes of his life, Luk. 1. 75.

Nine things required of all that shall be saved by Christ.

So then what things are required of all that shall be saved by Christ. Now therefore if these things be in you in some measure of truth, then your hope is currant, sound and good; otherwise it is nothing worth. For in vain do men say, They hope to be saved by Christ, when as they walk dissolutely. The reason hereof is, because the members must be suitable to the head; but Christ our head is holy, therefore we his members must be holy also: as it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy. Otherwise, if we will joyn prophane and ungodly members to our holy head Christ, then we make Christ a monster. As if a man should joyn unto the head of a Lyon, the Neck of a Bear, the body of a Wolf, and the legs of a Fox, were it not a monstrous thing? would it not make a monstrous creature? Even such

1 Pet. 1. 16.

such a thing they go about, which would have Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers, and such like to be members of Christ, and to have life and salvation by him. But sith you do so much presume on Christ, I pray you let me ask you a question.

Antil. What is that?

Theol. How do you know that Christ dyed for you particularly and by name?

Antil. Christ dyed for all men, and therefore for me.

Theol. But all men shall not be saved by Christ. How therefore do you know that you are one of them that have special interest in Christ, and shall be saved by his death?

Antil. This I know, we are all sinners, and cannot be saved by any other then by Christ.

Theol. Answer directly to my question. How do you know in your self, and for your self, that you are one of the Elect, and one of those for whom Christ dyed?

Antil. I know it by my good faith in God, because I put my whole trust in him, and in none other.

The. But how know you, that you have faith? or how shall a man know his faith?

Antil. I know it by this, that I have always had as good a meaning, and as good a faith to God-ward, as any man of my calling, and that is not book-learned, I have alwaies feared God with all my heart, and served him with my prayers.

Theol. Tush, now you go about the bush, and hover in the air: answer me to the point.

point. How do you know certainly, and assuredly, that Christ dyed for you particularly and by name?

Antil. You would make a man mad. You put me out of my faith; you drive me from Christ. But if you go about to drive me from Christ, I will never believe you. For I know we must be saved onely by him.

Theol. I go not about to drive you from Christ, but to drive you to Christ. For how can I drive you from Christ, seeing you never came near him? How can I drive you out of Christ, seeing you were never in him? But this it is, that deceiveth you and many others, that you think you believe in Christ, because you say you believe in Christ: as though faith consisted in words; or as though a man had faith, because he saith so. If every one that saith he hath faith, therefore hath faith; and every one that saith he believeth Christ, doth therefore believe; then who will not have faith? who will not believe? But in very deed your faith, and the faith of many others, is nothing else but meer imagination. But all this while you have not answered my question touching your particular knowledge of Christ.

Antil. I can answer you no otherwise then I have answered you. And I think I have answered you sufficiently.

Theol. No, no: you faulter in your speech; your answer is not worth a button: you speak you wot not what, you are altogether befogged and benighted in this question.

question. But if there were in your heart the true knowledge and lively feeling of God, Then I am sure you would have yeilded another and a better answer: then you would have spoken something from the sence and feeling of your own heart, and from the work of Gods grace within you. But because you can yeild no sound reason that Christ dyed for you particularly and by name, therefore I suspect you are none of them which have proper interest in him, and in whom his death takes effect indeed.

Poil. I think this question would gravel a great number: and few there be that can answer it aright.

Theol. It is most certain, I know it by lamentable experience, that not one of a hundred can soundly and sufficiently answer this question, none indeed, but only those in whom the new work is wrought, and do by the inward work of the Spirit feel Christ to be theirs. I have talked with some, which are both witty, sensible and learned, who notwithstanding, when they have been brought to this very point and issue, have stuck fast at it, and staggered very much. And howsoever they might by wit and learning shuffle it over, and in a blundering sort speak reason, yet had they no feeling of that which they said, and therefore no assurance; and consequently, as good never a whit, as never the better. It is the sanctifying Spirit, that giveth feeling in this point: and therefore without the feeling of the operation

ration of the same Spirit, it can never be soundly answered. Thus then, I do close up this whole matter: As the Vine-branch cannot live and bring forth fruit, except it abide in the Vine; no more can we, except we abide in Christ, and be truely grafted in him by a lively faith: None can have any benefit by him: but they onely which dwell in him: None can live by Christ, but they which are changed into Christ: none are partakers of his body, but they which are in his body: None can be saved by Christ crucified, but they which are crucified with Christ: None can live with him being dead, but those which dye with him being alive. Therefore let us root downward in mortification, that we may shoot upward in Sanctification: let us dye to sin, that we may live to righteousness; let us die while we are alive, that we may live when we are dead.

Asun. If none can be saved by Christ, but onely those which are so qualifyed as you speak of, then Lord have mercy upon us; then the way to heaven is very strait indeed, and few at all shall be saved. For there be few such in the world.

Theol. You are no whit therein deceived. For when all comes to all, it is most certain, that few shall be saved: which thing I will shew unto you both by Scripture, reasons and examples.

Asun. First then, let us hear it proved by the Scriptures.

Theol. Our Lord Jesus saith, Enter Mat. 7. in 13.

in at the ſtrait gate. For it is the wide gate, and broad way that leads to deſtruction; and many there be which go in thereat: becauſe the gate is ſtrait, and the way narrow, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Again, he ſaith, Many are called, but few are choſen. In another place, we read of a certain man which came to our Saviour Chriſt, and asked him of purpoſe, whether few ſhould be ſaved: To whom our Saviour anſwered thus: Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate. For many (I ſay unto you) will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able. In which anſwer, albeit our Saviour doth not anſwer directly to his queſtion, either negatively or affirmatively; yet doth hé plainly inſinuate by his ſpeeches, that few ſhall be ſaved. For firſt, he bids us ſtrive earneſtly, noting thereby, that it is a matter of great grief againſt the world, the Fleſh and the Devil. Secondly, hé affirmeth, that the gate is very ſtrait; noting that none can enter in without vehement crowding, and almoſt breaking their ſhoulder-bones. Laſtly, he ſaith, That many which ſeek to enter in, ſhall not be able; noting thereby, that even of them that ſeek, many ſhall ſtep ſhort, becauſe they ſeek him not aright. Eſaias alſo ſaith, Except the Lord of Hoſts had left us a ſeed, wee had been as Sodom, and had been like to Gomorrah. The Apoſtle alſo alledgeth out of the Prophet, that the Lord will make a ſhort account in the earth, and gather it into a ſhort ſumme with righteouſneſs,

Mat. 20. 16.

Luk. 13 24.

Eſa. 1. 9

Rom. 9. 28.

Eſa. 10. 22.

ousnes. These Scriptures, I think, are sufficient to prove that few shall be saved.

Asm. Now let us hear your reasons.

Theol. If we come to reason, we may rather wonder that any should be saved, then that few shall be saved. For we have all the lets and hindrances that may be, both within us and without us. We have (as they say) the Sun, Moon, and seven Stars against us. We have all the Devils in Hell against us, with all their horns, heads, marvellous strength, infinite wiles, cunning devises, deep sleights, and methodical temptations. Here runs a foul stream against us. Then have we this present evil world against us, with her innumerable baits, snares, nets, gins, and grins, to catch us, fetter us, and entangle us. Here we have profits and pleasures, riches and honour, wealth and preferment, ambition and covetousnesse. Here comes in a Camp-Royal of spiritual and invisible enemies. Lastly, we have our flesh, that is, our corrupted nature, against us: we have our selves against our selves. For we our selves are as great enemies to our salvation, as either the world or the Devil. For our Understanding, Reason, will and Affections, are altogether against us. Our natural wisdom is an enemy unto us. Our concupiscences and lusts, do minister strength to Satans temptations. They are all in league with Satan against us. They take part with him in every thing against us

and

and our salvation. They fight all under his standard, and receive their pay of him. This then goeth hard on our side, that the devil hath an inward part against us, and we carry alwaies within us, our greatest enemy, which is ever ready, day and night, to betray us into the hands of Satan; yea, to unbolt the door, and let him in to cut our throats. Here then we see an huge army of dreadful enemys, and a very legion of devils, lying in ambush against our souls. Are not we therefore poor wretches in a most pitiful case, which are thus betrayed and besieged on every side! All things then considered, may we not justly marvel that any shall be saved? For who seeth not, who knoweth not, that thousand thousands are carryed headlong to destruction, either with the temptations of the world, the flesh or the Devil? But yet further, I will shew by another very manifest and apparent reason, that the number of Gods Elect upon the face of the earth, are very few in comparison: which may thus bee considered: First, let there be taken from amongst us all treacherous Papists, Atheists and Hereticks. Secondly, let there be shoaled out all vicious and notorious Evil-livers; as, Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers, Worldlings, Deceivers, Conseners, Proud men, Rioters, Gamesters, and all the profane multitude. Thirdly, Let there be refused and sorted out, all Hypocrites, carnal Protestants, vain Professors, Back-sliders, Deceivers

and

and cold Christians. Let all these, I say, be separated, and then tell me how many sound, sincere, faithful and zealous worshippers of God, will be found amongst us. I suppose we should not need the Art of Arithmetick to number them. For I think there would be very few in every Village, Town and City; I doubt they would walk very thinly in the streets, so as a man might easily tell them as they go. Our Lord Jesus askes a question in the Gospel of St. Luke, saying, Do you think when the Son of man cometh, that he shall find faith on the earth? To which we may answer, Surely very little. Luk. 18 8.

Phil. Now according to your promise, shew this thing also by examples.

Theol. In the first age of the world, all flesh had so corrupted their wayes, that God could no longer bear them, but even vowed their destruction by the overflowing of waters. When the flood came, how few were found faithful? Eight persons onely were saved by the Ark. How few righteous were found in Sodom, and the Cities adjoyning? But one pair Lot and his Family. How few Believers were found in Jericho? But one Rahab. How few of the old Israelites entred into the Land of Promise? But two; Caleb and Joshua; the rest could not enter in, because of their unbelief. Heb. 3. 19. The true and visible Church was small, during the government of the Judges, as appeareth plentifully in that Book. In Elijah's time, the Church was so small, that it did not appear

1 King. 20.27. pear. In the reign of the Kings of Israel and Judah, the sincere worshippers were very few, as appeareth by all the Prophets. During the Captivity, the Church was as the Moon under a Cloud, shee was driven into the wildernesse, where she hid her self. During the persecutions of the Greek Empire, by Gog, Magog and Ægypt, they were fewest of all. In Christs time, what a silly company did hee begin withal? How were all things corrupted by the Priests, Scribes and Pharisees? In the beginning of the Apostles preaching, there were but few believers. After the first six hundred years, what an Eclipse was in the Church, during the height of Antichrists Reign? How few true Worshippers of GOD were in the World for the space almost of seven hundred years? Since the Gospel was broached and spread abroad, how few do believe? And as the Prophet saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? Thus then you see it is apparent, (both by Scripture, reason and examples of all Ages) that the number of the Elect is very small, & when all comes to all, few shall be saved.

Esa. 53. 1.

Phil. I pray you tell us how few, and to what scantling they may be reduced; whether one of an hundred, or one of a thousand shall bee saved?

Theol. No man knows that, neither can I give you any direct and certain answer unto it. But I say, that in comparison of the Reprobate, there shall but a few be saved. For all that profesle the Gospel

ſpel, are not the true Church before God. There be many in the Church, which are not of the Church.

Phil. How do you prove that?

Theol. Out of the ninth to the Romans, where the Apoſtle ſaith, All are not *Iſrael*, that are of *Iſrael*. And again, Eſay cryeth concerning Iſrael, Though the number of the children of Iſrael were as the ſand of the ſea, yet but a remnant ſhall be ſaved, *Ro.*9.27 Rom. 9. 6.

Phil. How do you balance it in the viſible Church, or in what compariſon do you take it? let us hear ſome eſtimate of it. Some think one of an hundred, ſome, but one of a thouſand ſhall be ſaved.

Theol. Indeed I have heard ſome learned and godly Divines give ſuch conjectures: but for that matter I can ſay nothing to it. But onely let us obſerve the compariſon of the Holy Ghoſt betwixt a remnant and the ſand of the Sea, and it will give ſome light into the matter. Rom. 9. 27.

Phil. Doth not the knowledge of this doctrin diſcourage men from ſeeking after God?

Theol. Nothing leſs: but rather it ought to awake & ſtir up in us a greater care of our ſalvation that we may be in the number of Chriſts little flock, which make an end of their ſalvation in fear & trembling. Phil. 2. 12.

Phil. Some make light of all theſe matters. Others ſay, As for the life to come, that is the leaſt matter of an hundred to be cared for. As for that matter, they will leave it to God, even as pleaſeth him: they will not meddle with it. For they ſay, God that made them, muſt ſave them. They hope they ſhall do as

well as others, and make as good shift as their neighbours.

Theol. **It is lamentable that men should bee so careless, and make so light of that which (of all other things) is most weighty and important.** For what shall it profit a man though he should win the whole world, if he lose his soul? **as the Author of all wisdome testifieth,** Mat. 16. 26.

Antil. I pray you, Sir, under correction, give me leave to speak my mind in this point. I am an ignorant man, pardon me, if I speak amiss: for a fools bolt is soon shot.

Theol. **Say on.**

Antil. I do verily think that God is stronger then the Devil. Therefore I cannot believe that hee will suffer the Devil to have more than himself. Hee will not take it at his hands. He loveth mankinde better then so.

Theol. **You do carnally imagine, that God will wrestle and strive with the devil about the matter. It is for Gods power, it doth never crosse his will; for God can do nothing against his will and Decree, because he will not.**

Anti. Yea, but the Scripture saith, God will have all men saved.

Theol. **That is not meant of every particular man, but of all sorts some; some Jews, some Gentiles; some rich, some poor; some high, some low,** &c.

Anti. Christ dyed for all; therefore all shall be saved.

Theol. **Christ dyed for all in sufficiency of his death, but not in efficacy unto life.**

For

For onely the Elect shall be saved by his death: as it is written; This is my blood in the New Testament, which is given for you; **meaning his Disciples and chosen children. And again, Christ being consecrated, is made the** Author of salvation to all that obey him. Luk. 22. 20.

Asun. God is merciful, and therefore I hope he will save the greatest part for his mercy sake.

Theol. **The greatest part shall perish: but all that shall be saved, shall be saved by his mercy; as it is written**, He will have mercy on whom hee will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth. **And again**, It is not in him that willeth, or in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy. Rom. 9. 18. **Therefore though God be infinite in mercy, and Christ infinite in merit, yet none shall have mercy, but only the vessels of mercy.**

Antil. Can you tell who shall be saved, and who shall be damned? Do you know Gods secrets? When were you in Heaven? When spake you with God? I am of the mind that all men shall be saved. For Gods mercy is above all his works. Say you what you will, and what you can, God did not make us to condemn us.

Theol. **You are very peremptory indeed: you are more bold then wise; for Christ saith, Few shall be saved; you say, All shall be saved. Whether then shall we believe Christ or you?**

Antil. If there should come two souls, one from heaven, and another from hell, and bring

bring us certain news how the case stood, then I would believe it indeed.

Theol. **But case two souls of the dead should come, the one from Heaven, the other from Hell, I can tell you afore-hand certainly what they would say, and what news they would bring.**

Antil. What, I pray you?

Theol. **They would say, There be few in Heaven, and many in Hell: Heaven is empty, and Hell is full.**

Antil. How know you that? how know you they would say so?

Theol. **I am sure, if they speak the truth, they must needs say so.**

Antil. Must they needs? Why I pray you, must they needs?

Theol. **Because the Word of God saith so. Because** Moses **and the Prophets say so. If you will not believe** Moses **and the Prophets, neither will you believe though one, though two, though an hundred, should rise from the dead.**

Antil. Yes, but I would.

Theol. **I pray you let me ask you a question: whether do you think that God and his Word, or the souls of dead men, are more to be credited?**

Antil. If I were sure that God said so, then I would believe it.

Theol. **If his Word say so, doth not he say so? Is not he and his Word all one?**

Antil. Yet for all that, if I might hear God himself speak it, it would move me much.

Theol. **You shew your self to be a notable Infidel. You will not believe Gods**

Word

Word without signs and miracles, and wonders from the dead.

Antil. You speak as though you knew certainly that Hell is full: you do but speak at randome, you cannot tell, you were never there to see. But for mine own part, I beleeve there is no Hell at all, but only the hell of a mans conscience.

Theol. Now you shew your self in kind what you are. You say you beleeve no hell at all. And, I think if you were well examined, you beleeve no heaven at all, neither God nor Devil.

Antil. Yes, I beleeve there is a Heaven, because I see it with mine eyes.

Theol. You will beleeve no more belike then you see: but, Blessed is he that beleeveth, & seeth not. You are one of the rankest Atheists that ever I talked withal. Joh. 20. 29.

Antil. You ought not to judge, you know not mens hearts.

Theol. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. *Mat.* 12. 34. You have sufficiently bewrayed your heart by your words: for the tongue is the key of the mind. As for judging, I judge you onely by your fruits: which is lawful. For we may justly say, It is a bad tree which bringeth forth bad fruit: and he that doth wickedly, is a wicked man. But it is you, and such as you are, that will take upon you to judge mens hearts: for though a mans outward actions be religious and honest, yet you will condemn him. And if a man give himself to the Word and Prayer, reform his family, and abstain from

the grosse sins of the world, you will by and by say, He is an Hipocrite. And thus you take upon you to judge mens hearts, as though you knew with what affection these things are done.

Anvil. I confesse I am a sinner, and so are all other for ought I know. There is no man but he may be amended. I pray God send us all of his grace, that wee may please him, and get to Heaven at the last.

Theol. Now you would shuffle up all together, as though you were as good as the best, and as though there were no difference of sinners: but you must learn to know that there is a great difference of sinners, for there is the penitent and impenitent sinner; the carefull and the carelesse sinner; the sinner whose sins are not imputed, and the sinner whose sins are imputed; the sinner that shall be saved, and the sinner that shall be damned. For it is one thing to sin of frailty, another thing to live in it, dwell in it, and trade in it, and (as the Holy Ghost speaketh) to suck it in, as the fish sucketh water, & to draw it unto us with cart-ropes and cords of vanity.

Esay. 5. 18.

To conclude therefore: there is as great difference betwixt a sinner and a sinner, as betwixt light and darknesse. For though Gods Children be sinners in respect of the remnants of sin within them, yet the Scriptures call them Just and Righteous, because they are justified by Christ, and sanctified by his grace and holy Spirit. And for this cause it is, that

St.

St. John saith, He that is born of God sinneth not, 1 John 4. 6.

Antil What, I pray you, did you never sin?

Theol. **Yes, and what then? what are you the better?**

Antil You Preachers cannot agree amongst your selves: one saith one thing, and another saith another thing, so that you bring the ignorant people into a mammering, and they know not on which hand to take.

Theol. **The Preachers, God be thanked, agree very well together in all the main grounds of Religion, and principal points of salvation. But if they dissent in some other matters, you are to try the spirits whether they be of God or no. You must try all things, & keep that which is good.**

Antil. How can plain and simple men try the spirits and doctrines of the Preachers?

Theol. **Yes, for the Apostle saith,** The spiritual man discerneth all things. **And** St. John **saith to the holy Christians,** You have received an oyntment from that holy One, and know all things: **that is, all things necessary to salvation. Those therefore which have the Spirit of God, can judge and discern of doctrines, whether they be of God or no.** 1 Cor. 2. 15. 1 Joh. 2 20.

Antil. I am not book-learned, and therefore I cannot judge of such matters; As for hearing of Sermons, I have no leisure to go to them, I have somewhat else to do. Let them that are bookish, and hear so many Sermons, judge of such matters; for I will not meddle with them, they belong not unto mee.

Theol. **Yet for all that, you ought to read**

the Scriptures and hear the Word of God preached, that you may be able to discern betwixt truth and falshood in matters of Religion.

Antil. Belike you think none can be saved without preaching, and that all men stand bound to frequent Sermons: but I am not of your minde in that.

Joh. 10. 16. Joh. 8. 47. Theol. Our Lord Jesus saith, My sheep hear my voyce And again he saith, He that is of God, heareth Gods Word. Ye therefore hear it not, because ye are not of God. You see therefore how Christ Jesus maketh it a special note of Gods children to hear his Word preached.

Antil But I think we may serve God well enough without a Preacher. For Preachers are but men, and what can they do? A Preacher is a good man so long as hee is in the Pulpit; but if he be out of the Pulpit, he is but as another man.

Rom. 10. 17. Theol. You speak contemptuously of Gods messengers, and of Gods sacred ordinance. But the Apostle doth fully answer your objection, saying, Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God: and how can they hear without a Preacher? In which words the Apostle tells you flatly, that you can never have faith nor serve God aright without Preaching.

Antil. When you have preached all that you can, you can make the Word of God no better then it is; and some put in and put out what they list. The Scriptures are but mens inventions, and they made the Scriptures.

Theol. We preach not to make the Word bet-

better, but to make you better. As for putting in & putting out, it is a meer untruth. And whereas you say, The Scriptures were made by men, it is blasphemy once to think it; and you are worthy to receive your answer at Tiburn.

Antil. Now I see you are hot. I perceive for all your godliness, you will be angry.

Theol. I take it to be no sin to be angry against sin. For your sin is very great, and who can bear it?

Antil. All this while you speak much for preaching, but you say nothing for prayer. I think there is as much need of prayer, as preaching. For I finde in the Scriptures, Pray continually; but I finde not, Preach continually.

Theol. No man denieth but that Prayer is most needful, always to be joyned unto Preaching, and all other holy exercises: for it is the hand-maid to all. But yet wee prefer Preaching above it, because Preaching is both the director and whet-stone of Prayer; yea it steereth us aright in all spiritual actions and services whatsoever: without the which we can keep no certain course, but are ever ready to erre on this hand or that. Now whereas you say you find, Pray continually, but not Preach continually, you might (if you were not wilfully blind) finde also, Preach continually: for the Apostle saith, Be instant, preach the Word in season and out of season; that is, always, as time and occasion shall serve. 2 Tim. 4.2.

Antil. You extol preaching, but you say nothing for reading. I beleive you condemn reading.

Theol. Doth he that highly commendeth gold, condemn silver? I do ingenuously confess, that both publick and private reading of the Scriptures, is very necessary and profitable, and would to God it were more used then it is; for it is of singular use, both to increase knowledg and judgement, and also to make us more fit to hear the Word preached. For such men as are altogether ignorant of the History of the Bible, can hear the Word with small comfort.

Phil. It seems that this man neither regards the one nor the other: because, for ought that I can see, he cares not greatly if the Scriptures were burnt.

Antil. Oh, Sirrah, you speak very malepertly; you may speak when you are bidden. Who made you a judge? you are one of his disciples, and that maketh you to speak of his side.

Phil. No Sir, I hope I am Christs Disciple, and no mans. But assuredly I cannot hold my peace at your vile cavilling, and most blasphemous speeches.

Antil. I cry you mercy, Sir, you seem to be one of these Scripture-men: you are of the Spirit: you are so full of it, that it runneth out at your nostrils.

Phil. You do plainly shew your self to be a scoffing *Ismaelite*.

Antil. And you do plainly shew your self to be one of the folk of God which know their seats in Heaven.

Phil. I pray God be merciful unto you, and give you a better heart: for I see you are in

in the gall of bitterneſs, and in the bond of iniquity.

Antil. You think there is none good but ſuch as your ſelf, and ſuch as can pleaſe your humour. You will, forſooth, be all pure. But by God there be a company of pure knaves of you.

Theol. **Now you do manifeſtly ſhew of what ſpirit you are. For you both ſwear and rail with one breath.**

Antil. God forgive me. Why did he anger me then? There be a company of ſuch controllers as he in the world, that no body can be quiet for them.

Theol. **I perceive a little thing will anger you, ſith you be angry with him for ſpeaking the truth.**

Antil. What hath he to do with me? He is more buſſe then needs. Why doth he ſay I am in a bad caſe? I will not come to him to learn my duty. If I have faults, he ſhall not anſwer for them. I ſhall anſwer for mine own faults, and every Fat ſhall ſtand on his own bottom. Let him meddle with that he hath to do withal.

Theol. **You are too impatient: you take matters at the worſt. We ought friendly, and in love, to admoniſh one another: for we muſt have a care one of anothers ſalvation. I have ſay for him, that he ſpeaks both out of love and compaſſion towards you.**

Antil. I care not for ſuch love. Let him keep it to himſelf. What doth he think of me? doth he ſuppoſe that I have not a ſoul to ſave as well as he? or that I have no care

of my salvation? I would he should know, that I have as great care of my salvation as he, though I make not such outward shews: for all is not gold that glisters; I have as good a meaning as he, though I cannot utter it.

Theol. **These words might well be spared; I hope you will be pacified and amend your life, and draw near to God hereafter.**

Antil. Truly, Sir, you may think of mee what you please; but I assure you, I have more care that way, then all the world wonders at: I thank God for it, I say my prayers every night when I am in my bed; and if good prayers will do us no good, God help us. I have alwaies served God duely and truely, and had him in my minde. I do as I would be done to. I keep my Church, and tend my prayers while I am there; and I hope I am not so bad as this fellow would make mee. I am sure if I be bad, I am not the worst in the world, there bee as bad as I. If I go to hell, I shall have fellows, and make as good shift as others.

Theol. **You think you have spoken wisely, but I like not your answer. For your words smell strongly both of ignorance, pride and unbelief. For first, you justifie your self in your faithlesse and ignorant worship of God. And secondly, you justifie your self by comparison with others, because others are as bad as you, and you are not the worst in the world.**

Antil. Now I know you speak of ill will: for you never had a good opinion of mee.

Theol. **I would I could have as good an opinion of you as I do desire, and that I might**

might see that wrought in you, which might draw my love and liking towards you. And as for ill will, the Lord knoweth I bear you none. I desire your conversion and salvation with my whole heart, and I would think my self happy if I might save your soul with the losse of my right arm.

Anti. I hope I may repent. For the Scripture saith, At what time soever a sinner doth repent, God will have mercy on him. Therefore if I may have space and grace, and time to repent before death, and ask God forgiveness, and say my prayers, and cry God mercy, I hope I shall do well enough.

Theol. You speak as though repentance were in your power, and at your commandment, and that you can put it into your own heart when you list; and that makes you, and many others presume of it three hours before death. But you must know, that repentance is the rare gift of GOD, and it is given but to a few. For God will know him well, that he bestoweth repentance upon; sith it is proper onely to the Elect. It is no worldly matter. It is not attained without many and frequent prayers, and much hearing, reading, and meditating in the Word of God. It is not so easie a matter to come by as the world judgeth, it is not found but of them that seek it diligently, and begg it earnestly. It is no ordinary three hours matter. Cry God mercy a little for fashion it will not do it. Cursory saying of a few prayers a little before death availeth not.

For

For though true repentance bee never too late, yet late repentance is seldome true. Herein delays are dangerous: for the longer we defer it, the worse is our case. The farther a nail is driven in with a hammer, the harder it is to get out again. The longer a disease is let run, the harder it is to cure. The deeper a Tree is rooted, the harder it is to pluck up again. The longer wee deferre the time of our repentance, the harder it will be to repent. And therefore it is dangerous driving it off to the last cast. For an ancient Father saith, We read but of one that repented at the last, that no man should presume; and yet of one, that none might despair. Augustine.

Well then, to conclude this point; I would have you to know that the present time is always the time of repentance: For time past cannot bee recovered, and time to come is uncertain.

Antil. Sir in my opinion you have uttered some very dangerous things, and such as were enough to drive a man to despair.

Theol. What be they, I pray you?

Antil. There be divers things. But one thing doth most of all stick in my stomack, and that is the small number that shall bee saved, as you say. But I can hardly be perswaded that God made so many thousands to cast them away when he had done. Do you think that God hath made us to condemn us? Will you make him to be the Author of condemnation.

Theol. Nothing lesse. For God is not the cause of mens condemnation, but theme

themselves. For every mans destruction cometh of himself: as it is written, O *Israel* thy destruction is of thy self. By for God, he doth (in great mercy) use all possible means to save souls, as he saith by the Prophet, What could I have done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done unto it? But to come near to your question: I deny that God hath created the most part of men onely and solely unto perdition, as the proper end which he did aim at in creating them; but he hath created all things for the praise of his glory: as it is written, Hee hath created all things for himself, and the wicked also for the evil day. Then it followeth, that the cause and end why the wicked were created, neither was nor is the onely destruction of his creatures, but his own praise and glory: that that onely might appear and shine forth in all his works. Yet certain it is, that God for just causes (albeit unknown and hid to us) hath rejected a great part of men: The causes, I say, of reprobation are hid in the eternal counsel of GOD and known to his godly wisdome onely. They are secret, and hid from us, reserved in his eternal wisdom to be revealed at the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus. His judgements (saith the Scripture) are as a great deep, and his ways past finding out. It is as possible for us to comprehend the Ocean in a little dish, as to comprehend the reason of Gods counsel in this behalf.

Hos. 13 9.

Esay. 5. 4.

Pro. 16. 4.

Rom. 11 33.

Psa. 36. 6.

Antil. What reason, justice, or equity is there

there that sentence of death should be passed upon men before they be born, and before they have done good or evil.

Theol. I told you before, that we can never comprehend the reason of Gods proceeding in this behalf, yet we must know, that his will is the rule of righteousness, and must be unto us instead of a thousand reasons. For whatsoever God willeth, in as much as he willeth it, it is to be holden just, we cannot conceive the reason of many natural things, and things subject to sense, as the motion of the celestial bodies, their unconceivable swiftnesse, their matter and substance, their magnitude, altitude and latitude. we cannot throughly finde out the causes of the thunder, lightning, winds, earth-quakes, ebbings and flowing of the Sea, and many other things under the Sun, how then can we possibly ascend up into the Privy-Chamber and Councel-house of God, to sift and search out the bottom of Gods secrets, which no wit or reach of man can any way attain unto? Let us therefore learn in GOD & fear to reverence that which we cannot in this life comprehend. This one thing I must say unto you, that whatsoever God decreeth, yet doth he prosecute no man till he hath ten thousand times deserved it. For betwixt the decree and the execution thereof, cometh sin in us, and most just causes of condemnation.

Anil. If God have decreed mens destruction, what can they do withal? who can resist his will? why then is he angry with us?

For

For all things must needs come to pass according to his decree and determination.

Theol. First, I answer you with the Apostle. O man, who art thou that pleadest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power of the clay, to make of the same lump one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour? Moreover, I answer, that Gods decree doth not enforce the will of man, which worketh and moveth of it self. It hath in it self the beginning of evil motion, and sinneth willingly. Therefore though the decree of God imposeth a necessity upon all secondary causes; (so as they must needs be framed and disposed according to the same) yet no co-action or constraint, for they are all carryed with their voluntary motion. Even as we see the plumb of a clock, being the first mover, doth cause all the other wheels to move, but not to move this way or that way; for in that they move some one way, and some another, it is of themselves: I mean, of their own frame: so Gods decree doth move all secondary causes, but takes not away their own proper motion. For God is the authour of every action, but not of any evil in any action. As the soul of man is the original cause of all motion in man, as the Philosophers dispute, but yet not of lame and impotent motion, for that is from another cause, to wit, some defect in the body. So, I say, Gods Decree is the root and first cause of motion, but not of defective Rom. 9. 20.

motion, that is from our selves. Likewise, that a bell soundeth, the cause is in him that ringeth it; but that it jarreth, the cause is in it self. Again, that an instrument soundeth, is in him that playeth upon it; but that it jarreth, is in it self; that is, in its own want of tuning. So then to shut up this point; all Instruments and middle causes are so moved of God, being the first mover, that he always doth work holily and fully in his moving. But the instruments moved are carried in contrary motions, according to their own nature and frame: If they be good, they are carryed to that which is good: but if they be evil, they are carryed unto evil. So that according to the double beginning of motion and will, there is a double and divers work and effect.

Antil. But from whence comes it that man of himself, that is, of his own free motion, doth will that which is evil?

Theol. From the fall of Adam, whereby his will was corrupted.

Antil. What was the cause of *Adams* fall?

Theol. The Devil, and the deprivation of his own will.

Antil. How could his will incline unto evil, it being made good, and he being made good?

Theol. He and his will were made good, yet mutably good. For to be immutably good, is proper only to God. And Adam did so stand, that he might fall; as the event declared.

Antil. Was not the decree of God the cause of *Adams* fall?

Theol.

Theol. No; but the voluntary inclination of his will unto evil. For Adam's will was neither forced, nor by any violence of Gods purpose, compelled to confent: but he of a free will and ready mind jete God, and joyned with the Devil.

Thus then I do determine, That Adam sinned necessarily, if you respect the decree or event: but if you respect the first mover and inherent cause, which was his own will, then he sinned voluntarily and contingently. For the decree of God did not take away his will, or the contingency thereof, but onely order and dispose it. Therefore (as a learned writer saith) *Voluit peccavit, & proprio motu*; He sinned willingly and of his own motion. Beza.

And therefore no evil is to be attributed unto God, as his decree.

Anth. How then do you conceive and consider of the purpose of God in all these things?

Theol. Thus: That God decreed with himself, unto act, at once, That there should be a world: That Adam should be created perfect: That he should fall of himself: That all should fall with him: That he would save some of the lost race: That he would do it of mercy through his Son: That he would condemn others for sin.

Anth. How do you prove the decree of reprobation; to wit, that God hath determined the destruction of thousands before the world was?

Theol. The Scripture calleth the Reprobates, The vessels of wrath prepared to destruction; The Scripture saith, God hath Rom. 9. 22. 1 Thes. 5. 9.

hath not appointed us unto wrath: Therefore it followeth that some are appointed unto wrath. The Scripture saith of the Reprobates, that they were even ordained to stumble at the Word. The Scripture saith, They were of old ordained to this condemnation, *Jude* 4.

1 Pet. 2. 8.

Ezek. 18. 32.

Anti. But how answer you this? God wills not the death of a sinner; therefore he hath predestinated none to destruction.

Theol. God wills not the death of a sinner simply and absolutely, as it is the destruction of his creature; but as it is a means to declare his justice, and to set forth his glory.

Anti. God did fore-see and fore-know that the wicked would perish through their own sin: but yet he did not predestinate them unto it.

Theol. Gods pre-science and fore-knowledge cannot be separated from his decree. For whatsoever God hath fore-seen and fore-known in his eternal counsel, he hath determined the same shall come to pass. For as it appertains to his wisdome to fore-know and fore-see all things: so doth it appertain to his power to moderate and rule all things according to his will.

Anti. What do you call prescience in God?

Theol. Pre-science in God is that whereby all things abide present before his eyes: so that to his eternal knowledge, nothing is past, nothing to come; but all things are alwaies present: and they are so present, that they are not as conceived imaginations, forms or motions, but all things are

are alwaies so present before God, that he doth behold them in their verity and perfection.

Anth. How can God justly determine of mens destruction, before they have sinned?

Theol. This objection hath been answered in part before: for I told you, that God condemneth none but for sin, either originall onely, or else, both originall and actuall. For howsoever he doth in himself, before all time, determine the reprobation of many, yet he proceeds to no execution till there be found in us both just desarts, and apparent cause. Therefore they deal unsoundly and foolishly, which confound the decree of reprobation with damnation it self; sith sin is the cause of the one, and onely the will of God of the other.

Phil. Well, sir, sith we are so far proceeded in this question, by the occasion of this mans objections and cavils, I pray you now, as you have spoken much of Reprobation, and the causes thereof; so let us hear somewhat of Election, and the causes thereof; and shew us out of the Scriptures, that God hath before all worlds chosen some to eternall life.

Theol. Touching the decree of election, there are almost none that make any doubt thereof: therefore shall I not be for this point. Onely I will confirm it by one or two testimonies out of Holy Scripture. First, the Apostle saith, Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spirituall Blessings, in Heavenly things in CHRIST, as he hath chosen us in him, Ephes. 1 3, 4.

before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love. **You see the words are very plain and pregnant for this purpose. Another confirmation was taken out of the eighth Chapter to the** Romans, **in these words:** Those whom he knew before, did he also predestinate to be like to the image of his own Son, that he might be the first-born of many brethren.

Phil. Which be the causes of Election?

Theol. **The causes of election are to be found onely in God himself. For his eternal Election dependeth neither upon man, neither yet upon any thing that is in man, but is purposed in himself, and established in Christ, in whom we are elected. This is fully proved in these words:** Who hath predestinated us to be adopted through Jesus Christ in himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glory, wherewith he hath made us freely accepted in his beloved. Eph. 1. 5, 6. **Where we see the Apostle telleth us, that his free grace and the good pleasure of his will, are the first motives or moving cause of our election.**

Phil. But the Papists fetch the first motive of election out of mans merits, and fore-seen works. For, say they, God did fore-see who would repent, believe, and do well; and therefore he made choice of them.

Theol. **But they are greatly deceived:** For I say again and again, that there is nothing in us which did ever move God to set his love upon us, & to chuse us un- Deut. 7. 7.

to

to life: but he ever found the original cause in himself: as it is written, Hee will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. And again, It is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth: but in God that sheweth mercy. The Lord himself also testifieth, that hée did chuse his people not for any respect in them, but only because hée loved them, and bare a special favour unto them. So then it is a certain truth, that Gods eternal predestination, excludeth all merits of men, and all power of his will, thereby to attain unto eternal life: and that his frée mercy, and undeserved favor is both the beginning, the midst, and the end of our salvation: that is to say, All is of him, and nothing of our selves.

Rom. 9. 18.

Rom. 9. 16.

Phil. Whether then doth faith depend upon election, or election upon faith? That is, whether did God chuse us, because we do believe? or whether do we beleive, because we are chosen?

Theol. Out of all doubt, both faith and all fruits of faith do depend upon Election, For therefore we believe, because we are elected; and not therefore elected, because we believe: As it is written, So many as were ordained to everlasting life, beleived.

Act. 13. 48.

Antil. If men be predestinated before they be born, to what purpose serve all precepts, admonitions, laws, &c? It forceth not how we live. For neither our godly or ungodly life can alter the purpose of God.

Theol. This is a very wicked and carnal objection, and sheweth a vile and dissolute

dissolute mind in them that use it. But I could wish such men to consider the end of election; which is that we should lead a godly life: as it is plainly set down in the first chapter to the Ephesians, ver. 4. where the Apostle saith, God hath chosen us before the foundation of the world. But to what end? that we should live as we list? No, no, saith he; But that we should be holy and unblameable before him. Again he saith, We are predestinated to be made like the image of his Son, that is, to be holy and righteous. For most certain it is, that we can judge nothing of predestination, but by the consequences: that is, by our calling, justification, and sanctification. For when once we feel the work of grace within us, (that is, that we are washed by the new birth, and renewed by the holy Ghost, finding in our selves an unfeigned hatred of sin, and love of righteousness) then are we sure, and out of all doubt, that we are predestinated to life. And it is even as much as if GOD had personally appeared unto us, and whispered us in the ear, and told us that our names are taken, and written in the Book of Life. For whom he hath predestinated, them hee hath called: and whom hee hath called, them he hath justified: and whom he hath justified, them he hath glorified. Now therefore till we feel these marks of election wrought in us, we can be at no certainty in this point; neither are we to take any notice of it, or to meddle in it: but we must strive, according to that we

Rom. 8. 29.

Rom. 8. 30.

were

wer and faculty we have, to the honestly and civilly, waiting when GOD will have mercy on us, and give us the true touch. As for them that are careless and dissolute, setting all at six and seven, there is small hope that they are elected, or ever shall be called.

Anti. I think the preaching and publishing of this doctrine of predestination, hath done much hurt: and it had been good it had never been known to the people, but utterly concealed. For some it driveth to despair, and others it maketh more secure and careless.

Theol. You are in a great errour: for this doctrine is part of Gods revealed Truth, which he would have known to his people. And in good sooth, it is of very great and comfortable use to the children of God, against all the assaults of the Devil, and temptations of desparation whatsoever. For when a man hath once in truth felt by the effects, that God hath chosen him to life, then though the Devil lye lour at him, and the conscience of sin and his own frailties do vehemently assault him; yet he knoweth certainly that the eternal purpose and counsel of GOD is immutable, and that because his Salvation is not grounded upon himself, or his own strength, but upon the unchangeable Decree of GOD, which is a foundation immoveable, and always standing sure and firm: therefore do the Devil and Sin what they can, yet he shall be upheld in righteousnesse and truth, and

even (as it were) hoist up in the arms of God even to the end. For whom God loveth, to the end he loveth them. Moreover, when once the Lords people perceive (by their sanctification and new birth) both that the Lord hath rejected and reprobated so many thousand thousands, and made choice of them to be heirs of his most glorious Kingdome, being in themselves of the same mould and making that others are, and that he hath done all this of his free grace and undeserved mercy towards them: Oh how doth it ravish their hearts with the love of him! Again, how frankly and chearfully do they serve him! how willingly and faithfully do they obey him! Yea, how are they wholly wrapt and enflamed with the desire of him! For it is the perswasion and feeling of Gods love towards us, that draweth up our love to him again: as S. John saith, 1 Joh. 4. We love him, because he hath loved us first.

Luk. 7. 47. Moreover, it is said of Mary Magdalen, that she loved much, because much was forgiven, for after she felt her many and great sins freely pardoned, her affections were kindled with the love and obedience of Christ. So likewise the Church in the Canticles, after she had been in the banqueting house of all spiritual grace, and felt the banner of Christs love displayed upon her: forthwith she was wrapt therewith, and cryed out (as it were in a swoun) that she was sick of love. So again, when Christ put in his hand by the hole of the door (that is, touched the very

Cant. 2. 5.

Cant. 5. 4.

inward

inward parts of her heart by his spirit) then her heart yerned, and her bowels were affectioned towards him. This is it which St. Paul prayed for upon his knees, that it may be granted to the Ephesians, that they may be able to comprehend with all the Saints, what is the breadth and length, height, and depth of Gods love towards us, and to know the love of Christ, (which passeth knowledge) and to be filled with all fulnes of God. Thus then you see the great and comfortable use of this doctrine of election, both in that it ministreth strength and comfort against all temptations, as also because it constraineth us to love GOD, and of very love to fear him, and obey him. Eph. 3. 18, 19.

Phil. Well, Sir, I think now you have spent time enough in answering the objections and cavils of *Antilegon*. In all which I do observe one thing, that there is no end of cavilling and objecting against the truth: and that a man may object more in an hour, then a learned man can well answer in a day.

Theol. You say truth. And the reason hereof is, because men have sin in them out of measure, and the Spirit of God but in measure. Therefore they can by the one, object and contrive more against the truth, then by the other they shall be able to answer and say for it.

Phil. It appeareth indeed, that errours bee infinite, and objections innumerable, and that there is no end of mens cavilling, against Gods sacred truth. It is good for us therefore to be thorowly setled in the truth, that

that we be not intangled, or snared with any cavils, or sophistications whatsoever. And I do verily think (notwithstanding all his objections and exceptions) that he doth in his conscience desire, with *Balaam*, to dye the death of the Righteous, and to bee as one of them whom he seemeth to despise.

Theol. **I am so perswaded too. For this is the triumph that vertue hath over vice, That where she is most hated, there she is often desired and wished for. And this is the great punishment that God bringeth upon the wicked;** *Virtutem ut videant intabescantque relicta*, **as saith the Poet**; That they shall see vertue, and pine away, having no power to follow it.

Phil. But now let us return to the point we were in hand with, before wee fell into these Objections and cavils: which was, concerning the small number that shall bee saved: and as you have shewed us many reasons thereof, so proceed to speak yet more unto that point.

Theol. **As I have shewed you of sundry lets, both within us & without us, which do keep us back from God, and hold us fast in our sins; so now, unto all that hath been said before, I will add nine great hinderances unto eternal life, which may not unfitly be termed nine bars out of Heaven, and nine gates into Hell.**

Phil. Which bee they?

Theol. **They be these.**

Nine gates into hel.

Infidelity: presumption of Gods mercy: Examples of the multitude: Long custom of sin: Long escaping of punishment:

ment: Hope of long life: conceitednesse: Ill company: Evil examples of ministers

Phil. These indeed be strong bars out of heaven, and wide gates into hell. I pray you therefore prove them out of the Scriptures, and lay them forth somewhat more largely.

Theol. **The first, which is infidelity, is proved out of the fourth chapter to the Hebrews, verse 2. where it is written,** Unto us was the Gospel preached, as unto them: but the word which they heard, profited them not, because it was not mixed with faith in those that heard it. **And again,** They could not enter in, because of unbelief. **Here was for that unbelief did bar out the old people from entring into the Land of Promise, which was a figure of Gods eternal Kingdom. And sure it is, that the same unbelief doth bar out thousands of us. For many will believe nothing but their own fantasies. They will not believe the Word of God: especially when it is contrary to their lusts and likings, profits and pleasures. Though things be manifestly proved to their faces, and both the chapter and the verse shewed them, yet will they not believe; or though they say they believe, yet will they never go about the practise of any thing, but reply against God in all their actions. And, for the most part, when God saith one thing, they will say another: when God saith Yea, they will say Nay, and so give God the lye. Some again will say,** If all be true that the Preachers say, then God help us. **Thus you see how infidelity doth bar men out of heaven, & cast them into hell.** Heb. 3. 19.

Phil. Let us hear of the second gate, which is, *Presumption of Gods mercy.*

Theol. This is set down in the 29 chapter of Deuteronomy, where the Lord saith thus: When a man heareth the words of this curse, and yet flattereth himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, although I walk according to the stubbornnesse of mine own heart, thus adding drunkennesse to thirst, (that is, one sin to another) the Lord will not bee merciful unto him, but the wrath of the Lord, and his jealousie, shall smoak against that man, and every curse that is written in this book, shall light upon him, and the Lord shall put out his name from under Heaven.

Here we see how the mighty God doth thunder down upon such as go on in their sins, presuming of his mercy, and saying in their hearts, If I may have but a Lord have mercy upon mee three hours before death, I care not. But it is just with God, when these three hours come, to shut men up in blindnesse, and hardnesse of heart, as a just plague for their presumption. Therefore the Prophet David, hating the grievousnesse of this sin, prayeth to be delivered from it: Keep me O Lord, (saith he) from presumptuous sins, let them not reign over mee. Let all men therefore take heed of presumptious sinning, though God be full of mercy, yet he will shew no mercy to them that presume on his mercy. But they shall once know, to their cost, that justice goeth from him as well as mercy.

Psa. 19. 13.

Phil.

Phil. Let us come to the third gate, which is, the *Example of the Multitude.*

Theol. **This is proved in the 23 of Exodus, ver. 2. where the Lord saith flatly,** Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil. **In another place, the Lord saith,** After the doing of the Land of *Egypt*, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do; and after the manner of the Land of *Canaan*, whither I will bring you, shall ye not do, neither walk in their ordinances. Lev. 18. 3.

Against this Law did the children of Israel offend, when they said in the stubbornnesse of their heart to the Prophet Jeremy, The word that thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hear, but we will do whatsoever goeth out of our mouth, and wee will do as we have done, both we and our Fathers, our Kings and our Princes, in the Cities of *Judah*, and the streets of *Jerusalem*, *Jer.* 44. 16.

Note here, how they do altogether refuse the Word of the Lord, and how they follow the example of the multitude. We see in these our days by lamentable experience, how thoulands are violently carried down the stream; and for defence of it, some will say, Do as the most men do, and the fewest will speak ill of you: which is a very wicked speech. For if wee will follow the course of the most, we shall have the reward of the most, which is eternal perdition. Let us therefore take heed of bending with the sway: for the sway of the world doth weigh down all things that can be spoken out of the word of God,

and openeth a very wide passage into hell

Phil. Proceed to the fourth gate into hell, which is, the *long custome of sin.*

Theol. This is noted by the Prophet Jeremy to be a very dangerous thing. For he saith, Can the Black-moor change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, which are accustomed to do evil. Noting thereby, that it is as hard a matter to leave an old custom of sin, as to wash a Blackmoor white or to change the spots of a Leopard, which because they are natural is most impossible. So when men through custome have made swearing, lying, adultery, & drunkenness, (as it were) natural to them, oh how hard it is to leave them! For custom maketh another nature, and taketh away all sence & feeling of sin.

Jer. 13. 23.

Phil. Let us hear of the fifth gate, which is, the *Long escaping of punishment.*

Theol. This is avouched by the wise man, in these words: Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the children of men are set in them to do evil. Where he sheweth, that one cause why men are so hardned in their sins, is, because God winketh at them, and letteth them alone, not punishing them immediately after they have sinned. For if God should forthwith strike down one, and rain fire and brimstone upon another, and cause the earth to swallow up a third, then men should fear indeed. But it hath been shewed before, that God taketh not that course, but though he met with some in this life, yet

Eccl. 8. 11.

he

he lets thousands escape, and that makes them more bold, thinking they shall never come to their answer; even as an old thief, which hath a long time escaped both Prison and Gallows, thinks he shall always so escape, and therefore goeth boldly on in his thefts. But let men take heed: For as the Proverb saith, Though the Pitcher goeth long to the Well, yet at last it cometh broken home: So though men escape long, yet they shall not escape always, for there will come a day of reckoning, a day that will pay it home for all. Thus you see how impunity leadeth numbers to destruction: that is, when men are let alone, and neither smitten by the hand of God, nor punished by the Law of the Magistrate.

Phil. Let us come to the sixth gate, which is the *Hope of long life.*

Theol. This is affirmed by our Saviour concerning that rich man, who when he felt the world come in upon him with full stream, said he would pull down his barns & build greater, & lay to his soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; live at ease, eat, drink, and take thy pastime. But our Saviour calls him fool, for flattering himself in security & promising unto himself long life. Moreover, he told him that the same night he should make a hellish and miserable end. Note, I pray you, how Jesus Christ, the fountain of all wisdom, calleth this man a fool, & yet doth a reason thereof: to wit, because he gathered riches to himself, and was not rich in God: he has great care of this life, and none at all

Luk. 12 19.

for that which is to come. So then it follo-weth that all such are right fools indeed, and may be chronicled for fools, (how wise soeber they be taken and reputed in the world) which have much care for their bodies, and none for their souls; great care for this life, and little for that which is to come. Well, let all such prophane Worldlings as dream and dote of long life, (and therefore defer the day of their repentance and confession unto God) take heed by this mans example, that they reckon not without their host, e be suddenly snatch'd away in the midst of all their pleasures and jollities as Job saith, Some die in their full strength, being in all ease and prosperity. Their breasts run full of milk, and their bones run full of marrow. We see therefore how dangerous a thing it is for men to flatter and sooth up themselves with hope of long life.

Job. 21. 23, 24

Phil. Proceed to the seventh gate, which is, *conceitedness*.

Theol. This is indeed a very broad gate into Hell. For the Scripture saith, Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of such a one. And again, The fool is wiser in his own eyes, then seven men that can give a sensible reason. The Holy Ghost we see affirmeth, That such as are puft up with an oher weening of their own gifts, are farthest of all other from the Kingdom of Heaven. For they despise the wisdom of God to their own destruction. They hold scorn to be taught: they will say they know as much as all the

Pro. 26. 12.

Pro. 26. 16

the Preachers can tell them. For what can all the Preachers say more then this? We are all sinners, we must be saved by Christ, we must do as we would be done to. There is no more but do well, and have well, &c. Alas poor souls! they look aloft, they are desperately boben up with conceitednesse, not knowing that they are poor, naked, blind, and miserable. Rev. 3. 17.

These men trust altogether to their own wit, learning, policy, riches, and great reputation in the world. And because all men crouch to them, and clap their hands at them therefore they swell like Turky-Cocks, set up their feathers, and draw their wings upon the ground with a kind of lust and disdain of all men, as if they were the only wights of the world. Moreover, when men do praise them for their natural gifts, sooth them and applaud them, then it is a wonder to see how they streak themselves, as though they would forthwith take their flight, and mount unto the clouds. But let all insolent and conceited men hearken unto the woe that is pronounced against them by the eternal King of Glory, saying, Wo unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight. Again, let them hearken to the counsel of God which saith, Trust unto the Lord with all thine heart, but lean not unto thine own wisdom. Bee not wise in thine own eyes, but fear God, and depart from evil. These silly conceited fools think, that because they have the cast of this life, and can cunningly com- Isa. 5. 21. Pro. 3. 5

pass the things of this world, and go through-stitch with them, therefore they can compasse heaven also by their fine wits, and deep devices: but alas, poor wretches, they are greatly and grossly deceived. For the wisdom of the world is foolishnesse with God, and he catcheth the wise in their own craftinesse. And again the Lord saith, I will destroy the wisdome of the wise, and will cast away the understanding of the prudent. Let not these men therefore stand too much in their own light, let them not trust to their own policies: for they are all but as an Ice of one nights freezing, which will deceive them that trust unto it. Let them therefore become fools in themselves, that God may make them wise. Let them deny themselves, that God may acknowledge them. Let them be humbled in themselves, that God may exalt them. For assuredly there is no use after this life for the most exquisite wisdom of the flesh, it endeth all when we end. For how dyeth the wise man? Even as dyeth the fool, saith the holy Ghost. And where all worldly wisdom endeth, there all heavenly wisdom beginneth. Thus therefore we see what a wide gate into hell Conceitednesse is and how many enter in thereat.

1 Cor. 3. 19.

Eccles. 2. 16.

Phil. Now let us understand of the eighth gate into hell, which is *Ill company*.

Theol. The Spirit of God foreseeing the great dangers of this, and knowing how ready we are to be carryed away with ill company, doth give us most earnest

neſt warning to take heed of it as a moſt dangerous thing. Enter not (ſaith he) in the way of the wicked, and walk not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, go not by it, turn from it, and paſs by. The reaſon hereof is yeilded in another place, where it is ſaid, A companion of fools ſhall be made worſe. Let men therefore take heed of ill company; for many thereby have been brought to the Gallows, and have confeſſed upon the Ladder, that ill company hath brought them unto it, and therefore have admoniſhed all by their example to take heed and beware of lewd company. Moreover, the Scripture ſaith. He that followeth vain companions, ſhall be filled with poverty. And again in the ſame chapter, He that keepeth company with banquetters, ſhameth his father. Let us therefore ſay with David, I am a companion of all them that fear God, and keep his Commandments. And on the contrary, let us ſay with him, I have not haunted with vain perſons, neither kept company with the diſſemblers. I hate the aſſembly of the evil, and have not accompanied with the wicked. Let us therefore by Davids example ſhun the company of the wicked: for as a man is, ſo is his company. It is the ſureſt note to diſcern a man by. For as all unlike things are unſociable, ſo all like things are ſociable. Herein let us beware we deceive not our ſelves with vain words, & an opinion of our ſtrength, as if we were as ſtrong as Chriſt, & could not be drawn away with any company. No,

Pro. 4. 14, 15.

Pro. 13. 20.

Pro. 28. 19.

Pſ. 119. 63.

Pſa. 26. 4, 5.

no: we are more apt to be drawn then to draw; to be drawn to evil by others, then to draw others to good: therefore God saith by his Prophet, Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them. Undoubtedly he is an odd man that is not made worse with ill company. For can a man touch pitch and not be defiled therewith? Can a man carry coals in his bosom, and not be burnt? Daily and lamentable experience sheweth, that many of them which think themselves strong, are thus way most grievously smutted. Let a man think therefore he never abandoneth evil, till he abandon ill company. For no good is concluded in this Parliament. For ill company is the suburbs of Hell. Furthermore, it is to be observed, that some upon admonitions, and some inward compunctions of their own conscience, do leave their sins until they have new provocations, and until they come among their old copesmates and sinful companions, and then are they carryed back again to their old bias, and return to their folly, as a dog returneth to his vomit. For we see some, which otherwise are of good natures and dispositions, most pitifully & violently carryed away with ill company. For even as green wood of it self is un apt to burn, yet being laid on the fire with a great deal of seare wood, it burneth as fast as the rest: So many toward youths, which of themselves are not so prone unto evil as others, yet with this violent stream and blustering tempest of ill company are carryed away. *Phil.*

Jer. 15. 19.

Prov. 26 21.

Phil. Let us come to the last gate, which is, the *Evil examples of Ministers.*

Theol. It grieveth me, and I am almost ashamed to speak of this point: For is it not a woful and lamentable thing that any such should be found amongst the sons of Levi? Is it not a curse, that the Ministers of Christ should be of a scandalous conversation? For if the eye be dark, how great is the darkness? If they be examples of all evil to the flock, which should be patterns, lights and examples of all goodness, must it not needs strengthen the hands of the wicked, so as they cannot return from their wickedness? But this is an old disease and evil sickness, which hath always been in the Church. The Prophet Jeremy doth most grievously complain of it in his time, and saith, That from the Prophets of *Jerusalem* is wickedness gone forth into all the Land. For both the Prophet and the Priest do wickedly. I have seen (saith he) in the Prophets of *Jerusalem*, filthiness. They commit adultery, and walk in lyes: they strengthen also the hands of the wicked, that none can return from his wickedness: they are all unto mee as *Sodom*, and the inhabitants thereof as *Gomorrah*: And in the ninth verse of the same chapter, he sheweth that it was no pleasure or joy unto him so publickly to reprove them, but that he did it with exceeding grief, as being forced thereunto, both in regard of Gods glory, and the good of the Church. His words are these: Mine heart breaketh within me, because of the Prophets, and

Jer. 23. 14.

and all my bones shake. Moreover, in the same Chapter is set down how the Lord would feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall, and sundry other ways plague them for their flatteries, seducements, corrupt doctrine, and evil example of life.

Phil. Most certain it is, that the evil example of Ministers, and especially of Preachers, is very dangerous and offensive; for thereby thousands are hardened in their sins. For men will say, Such a Minister, and such a Preacher doth thus and thus, and therefore why may not we do so too? They are learned, and know the Word of God, therefore if it were evil, I hope they would not do it: for they should be lights unto us, and give us good examples. Therefore sith they do such things, we cannot tell what to think, or what to say to the matter: They bring such simple folks as wee are into a mammering.

Theol. Oh that I could with the Prophet Jeremy, quake and shake to think of these matters! Oh that I could mourn as a Dove in penning of it! Oh that I had in the wilderness a cottage, and could with Job be a brother to the Dragons, and a companion to the Ostriges, whilst I have any thoughts of these things! Oh that I could weep and mourn without sin, before I yeild you an answer! For weep indeed I may, but answer I cannot. Alas (with much grief I speak it) all is too true that you say, and herein the people have a vantage against us, if I may call

call it a vantage. But let this be my answer: If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. Blind guides and blind people shall perish together. If because we are wicked, they will be more wicked, then both they and we shall burn in Hell fire together. Then let them reckon their gains, and see what they have got. They have small cause to tryumph over us, for thereby their matter is never a whit amended. Let them take this for answer. And let us that are the Ministers of Christ, and Preachers of the Gospel, look narrowly to our selves, and make streight steps to our feet: for if we tread never so little awry, we may see how many eyes are upon us. Let us therefore with David pray continually, Order my goings, O Lord, that my footsteps slip not: for when my foot slipped, they rejoyced against me. And as for the people, let them follow the examples of those which walk unblameably, (as God be thanked some such there be) and let them flee the examples of such as are offensive. So shall God have more glory, and they more peace in their own hearts. Thus have we heard what a wide gate is opened into Hell, by the evil examples of Ministers, and especially of Preachers. Mat. 15. 14.

Phil. Well, sith there be so many bars out of Heaven, and so many gates into Hell, it is a very hard matter to break thorow all these bars, and to enter into life; and as hard a matter to miss all these gates, and to escape Hell. He quits him well that can do it.

Theol.

Theol. **True indeed. And as hard a thing as that is, so hard a thing is it for flesh and blood to enter into the Kingdome of Heaven. And yet most men make light of it, and think it is the easiest matter of an hundred.**

Asun. As hard as it is, yet I hope by the grace of God I shall be one of them that shall enter in. For so long as I do as I would be done to, and say no body no harm, nor do no body no harm, God will have mercy on my soul. And I doubt not but my good deeds shall weigh against my evil deeds, and that I shall make even with God at my latter end. For I thank God for it, I have alwaies lived in his fear, and served him with a true intent: Therefore I know that so long as I keep his commandments, and live as my neighbours do, and as a Christian man ought to do, he will not damn my soul.

Theol. **Can you then keep Gods Commandments?**

Asun. As near as God will give me grace.

Theol. **Nay, but I ask you whether you kéep them or no?**

Asun. I do assay to keep them as near as I can: I do my true intent. Though I keep them not all, yet I am sure I keep some of them.

Theol. **Because you say you kéep some of them, I pray you let me be so bold with you, as to examine you in the particulars. You know the first Commandment is this:** Thou shalt have none other Gods in my sight. **How say you, do you kéep this?**

Asun. I am out of all fear of it. For I never

never worshipped any God but one. I am fully perswaded there is but one God.

Theol. **What say you then to the second Commandment?** Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image, &c.

Asun. I never worshipped any Images in my life, I defie them, I know they cannot help me, for they be but stocks and stones.

Theol. **What say you to the third Commandment? which is this,** Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, &c.

Asun. Nay certainly, I was never counted a swearer in my life, but I have served God alwaies of a child, and have had a good faith in him, ever since I could remember, I would be sorry else.

Theol. **What say you then to the fourth Commandment?** Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day &c.

Asun. Nay, for that matter I keep my Church as well as any man in the Parish where I dwell, and mind my prayers as well when I am there I thank God for it, (though I say it my self) I have been alway well given, and have loved Gods Word with all my heart; and it doth mee good to hear the Epistles and Gospels read every Sunday by our Vicar.

Theol. **Tell mee, what say you to the fifth Commandment? which is,** Honour thy father and thy mother, &c. **Do you keep this?**

Asun. I have alwaies loved and obeyed my father and mother from my heart. I hope there is no body can accuse me for that: and I am sure if I keep any Commandment, it is

is this. For when I was a boy every body said that I was well given, and a toward childe. Therefore if I should not keep this Commandment, it would be a great grief unto me, and go as near my heart, as any thing that came to me this seven years.

Theol. **What say you to the sixth Commandment?** Thou shalt not kill.

Asun. It were strange if I should not keep that.

Theol. **What say you to the seventh?** Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Asun. I thank God for it, I was never given to women God hath alwaies kept me from that; and I hope, will so still.

Theol. **What say you to the eighth?** Thou shalt not steal.

Asun. I am neither Whore-master nor Thief.

Theol. **What say you to the ninth?** Thou shalt not bear false witness, &c.

Asun. I defie all false witness-bearing from my heart.

Theol. **What say you to the last?** Thou shalt not covet.

Asun. I thank God for it, I never coveted any mans goods but mine own.

Theol. **Now I perceive, you are a wonderful man: you can keep all the Commandments. You are like the blind Ruler which said unto Christ,** All these things have I kept from my youth. **I perceive now indeed, that it is no marvel though you make so light of Preaching: for you have no need of it. You are whole, you need not the Physitian: you feel no misery, and there-**

Mat 19 20.

therefore you care not for mercy. For where misery is not felt, there mercy is not regarded: but I see you need no Saviour.

Asun. You say not well in that, I need a Saviour; and it is my Lord Jesus that must save mee, for he made mee.

Theol. **What need you a Saviour, sith you are no sinner?**

Asun. Yes, believe me, I am a sinner, we are all sinners: there is no man but hee sinneth.

Theol. **How can you be a sinner, sith you keep all the Commandments?**

Asun. Yes, I am a sinner for all that.

Theol. **Can you both be a sinner, and be without sin too? for hee that keepeth the Commandments, is without sin: which thing you say you do. But I see how the case standeth, that a great number of such ignorant and sottish men as you are, will in general say you are sinners, because your consciences telleth you so; but when it cometh to particulars, you know not how you sin, nor wherein. I pray you therefore let mee lead you thorow the Commandments again, and deal with you in particulars, that I may bring you to the sight of your sins. How say you therefore, Do you upon your knees, every Morning and Evening, give GOD thanks for his particular Mercies, and manifold Favors towards you? and do you call much upon him privately, and much also with your**

Family?

family? Answer me plainly and simply.

Asun. I cannot say so.

Theol. Then you have broken the first commandment, which chargeth us to give God his due worship, whereof prayer and thanksgiving are a part. So then here at the very entrance, you are found guilty. Further, I demand of you whether you never had any by-thoughts in your prayers, and your heart hath not been upon other matters, even then while you were in prayers?

Asun. I cannot deny that; For it is a very hard matter to pray without by-thoughts.

Theol. Then (by your own confession) you have broken the second Commandment, which doth command the right manner of Gods worship: that is, that as we must worship God, so we must do it in faith, love, zeal, and pure affections. So that here you are guilty also; because when you pray, your mind is of other matters, and you do it not in sincerity and truth. Further, I demand of you whether you did never swear by your faith and troth, or by our Lady St. Mary, and such other oaths?

Asun. Yes, by St. Mary have I: I must needs confess it.

Theol. Mee need no further witnesse, your very answer proveth it; for your answer is an oath: therefore, here also are you guilty, because you swear by Idols. For, I demand of you, whether you did never travel to Fairs on the Sabbath day, or make bargains on that day, or take journeys,

journeys, or talk of worldly matters, neglecting holy duties.

Asun. Yes, God forgive mee, I have.

Theol. **Then are you guilty of the breach of the fourth Commandment, which chargeth us on pain of death to spend the Sabbath day, in holy and religious duties, both publickly and privately. Further, I demand whether you instruct your wife, children and servants in the true knowledge of God, and pray with them or no?**

Asun. I am sure you would have me speak the truth. I must needs confess, I do not, neither am I able to do it.

Theol. **Then are you guilty of the breach of the fifth Commandment, which commandeth all duties of superiours, towards their inferiours, and of inferiours towards their superiours, whereof prayers and instructions are a part. Moreover, I demand whether you were ever angry or no?**

Asun. Yes, an hundred times in my daies; and I think there is no body but will be angry at one time or other, especially when they have cause.

Theol. **Then you have broken the sixth Commandment, which chargeth us to avoid wrath, anger, malice, desire of revenge, and all such like fore-runners unto murder. Furthermore, I ask you, whether you did never look upon a woman with a lust in your heart?**

Asun. Yes, for I think there is no man free from thoughts that way. I had thought, thoughts had been free.

Theol.

Theol. No: thoughts are not free before God; for God knoweth our thoughts, and will punish us, arraign us, and condemn us for thoughts. Men know not thoughts; and therefore can make no Laws against thoughts; but because God is privy to all our most secret thoughts, therefore he hath made Laws against them, and will condemn them. Therefore I conclude, that if you have nourished adulterous thoughts in your heart, you are guilty of the breach of the seventh Commandment, which forbiddeth all secret thoughts and provocations whatsoever to adultery. But further, I demand whether you did never pilfer, purloin, and steal some small things from your neighbour: as pasture, poultry, coney, apples, and such like?

Assu. I cannot clear my self in these things: for I had thought they had been no sin.

Theol. Then have you broken the eighth Commandment, and stand guilty of eternal death. For God in this Commandment chargeth us to have as great a care of our neighbours goods, as of our own; and not to injure him any manner of way, in thought, word or deed. Therefore all deceit pilfering, oppressing, and all unjust dealing with our neighbours goods, is here condemned. Moreover, let me ask you, whether you did never lye or dissemble?

Assu. Yes, assuredly.

Theol. Then have you broken the ninth Com-

Commandement: wherein God chargeth us, both in witness bearing, and all other matters, to speak the plain truth from our heart: without lying or dissembling.

Last of all, I demand, whether you did never in your heart desire something that was not your own: as your neighbours house, or ground, kine or sheep, &c. therein bewraying the discontentment of your heart.

Answ. I am as guilty in this, as in any thing. For, God forgive mee, I have often desired and lusted after this and that which was none of mine own, and so have bewrayed my discontentment.

Theol. Then I perceive (by your own confession) that you are guilty of the breach of all the Commandements.

Answ. I must needs confess it: for I see now more into that matter then ever I did. I never heard so much before in my life, nor was ever asked any such questions as you ask me. I had thought many of those things which you asked me, had been no sins at all.

Theol. I could have convicted you in a thousand other particulars, wherein you daily and hourly break the Law of God. But my purpose was onely to give you a taste of some particular transgressions, & therewithal some little light by the way into the meaning of the Law: that thereby you might be brought to some better sight of your self, and might a little perceive in what case you stand before God; & by that little, conceive a great deal more.

Answ. Well; now I do plainly see, that I have

have been deceived, and am not in so good estate before God: as I thought I had been. Moreover, I see that thousands are out of the way, which think they are in a good case before God: whereas indeed they are in blindness, and in their sins. But Lord have mercy upon us! I do now plainly see, that I am far from keeping the Commandments; and I think no man doth keep them.

Theol. You may swear it, I warrant you. For neither Saint Paul, David, or the Virgin Mary could ever keep any one of the Commandments. I am glad you begin to see into the Law of God, and to have some taste that way. For as a mans knowledge and insight is into the Law, so is his knowledge and insight into himself. He that hath a deep insight into the Law of God, hath also a deep insight into himself. He that hath no insight into the Law, can have no insight into himself. For the Law is that glasse, wherin we do behold the face of our souls before God. The Apostle saith, By the Law cometh the knowledge of sin. Therefore those who are altogether ignorant of the Law, and never behold themselves in this glasse, do commit an hundred sins a day, which they know not of; and therefore are not grieved for them. For how can a man be grieved for that which he knoweth not? But now farther, I pray you to give me leave to ask you some more questions of the principles of Religion; to the end, that you knowing and feeling your ignorance, may be humbled therewith, bewail it

it in time, and look after the true knowledge of God. But yet, by the way, I will ask Antilegon a question or two; because I desire to understand what knowledge he hath in the grounds of Religion. Tell me therefore, Antilegon, what was the reason why Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

Antil. I could answer you, but *I* will not. What authority have you to examine me? Shew your Commission. When I see your warrant, I will answer you: in the mean time, you have nothing to do to examine me. Meddle with that you have to do withall.

Theol. I perceive you are not onely ignorant, but wilful and obstinat, and refuse all instructions. Therefore I will leave you to God, and to your galled conscience. But I pray you, Asunetus, answer this question. What think you, what was the reason that Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost?

Asun. Believe me, Sir, that is an hard question; you may ask a wise man that question: for I cannot answer it.

Theol. What say you then to this, Who was Christs mother?

Asun. Marry, Sir, that was our blessed Lady.

Theol. What was Pontius Pilate?

Asun. I am somewhat ignorant, I am not book learned: but if you will have my simple opinion, I think it was the Devil. For none but the Devil would put our sweet Saviour to death.

Theol. What is the Holy Catholick Church which you do believe?

Asun.

Asun. The communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins.

Theol. **What do you pray for, when you say, Thy Kingdom come.**

Asun. I do pray that God would send us all of his grace, that we may serve him, and do as we ought to do, & keep us in a good mind to God-ward, and to have him much in our mind. For some (God bless us) have nothing but the Devil in their mind; they do nothing a Gods Name.

Theol. **What is the Sacrament?**

Asun. The Lords Supper.

Theol. **How many Sacraments be there?**

Asun. Two.

Theol. **Which be they?**

Asun. Bread and Wine.

Theol. **What is the principal end of your coming to receive the Sacrament?**

Asun To receive my Maker.

Theol. **What is the principal use of a Sacrament?**

Asun. The body and blood of Christ.

Theol. **What profit and comfort have you by a Sacrament?**

Asun. In token that Christ dyed for us.

Theol. **I can but pitty you for your ignorance: for it is exceeding grois and palpable. Your answers are to no purpose, and bewray a wonderful blindness and senselesnesse in matters of Religion. I am sorry that now I have not time and leisure to let you see your folly and extream ignorance, as also to lay open unto you the sense and meaning of the Articles**

ticles of the Faith the Lords Prayer, and the Sacraments, and all other the grounds of Christian Religion.

Asun. What course would you wish me to take, that I may come out of ignorance, and attain unto the true knowledge of God?

Theol. Surely I would wish you to be diligent in hearing of Sermons, and reading the Scriptures, with Prayer and humility. Also that you would peruse Catechisms, and other good books and especially Varels grounds of Religion, and the works of the two worthy servants of God, Master Gifford, and Master Perkins, and other mens, that have done great service to the Church, and for whom thousands are bound to give God thanks. If you take this course, you shall by Gods grace within a short time grow to some good measure of knowledge in all the main grounds of Christian Religion.

Phil. I had not thought any man had been so ignorant, as now I perceive this man is.

Theol. Yes verily, there be thousands in his case. And I do know by experience, that many will use the very same answers or at least, very little differing.

Phil. I warrant you, if you had questioned with him of kine or sheep, purchasing of Land, taking of Leases, or any other matters under the Sun, you should have found him very ripe and ready in his answers.

Theol. I am so perswaded too. For let a man talk with worldly men of worldly

matters, and their answer is never to seek. They will talk very freshly with you of such matters, if it be all the day long. For they have a deep insight into earthly things, and do wholly delight to talk of them, being never weary. For it is their joy, their meat and their drink. But come once to talk with them of Gods matters, as of faith, repentance, regeneration, &c. you shall find them the veriest ballards and dunces in the world. For when speech is had of these things, they are so bedogged, that they cannot tell where they are, nor what they say.

Phil. In my judgement, such mens case is very pitiful and dangerous: and so is this mans case also, if God do not very speedily pull him out of it.

Theol. Questionless: For God saith, Hos. 4. 6. My people perish for want of knowledge. Our Lord Jesus saith, that ignorance is the cause of all errours. Mat. 22. 29. Ye erre, saith he, not knowing the Scriptures. The Apostle saith, that ignorance doth alienate us from the life of God: For saith he, Eph. 4. 18. the *Gentiles* were darkned in their cogitation, being strangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them. So then it is clear that ignorance is not the mother of Devotion, as the Papists do avouch, but it is the mother of error, death and destruction, as the Scripture affirmeth. Our Lord foreseeing the great danger of ignorance, (how thereby thousands are carryed headlong into Hell) doth admonish all men to search the Scriptures, which

which do testifie of him, that so they might get out of the most dangerous guilt of ignorance, wherein multitudes are implanged. Therefore the noble men of Berea are commended by the Holy Ghost, because they received the Word with all readinesse, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Oh therefore that men would earnestly seek after the knowledge of God in time, and (as the Prophet saith) seek the Lord whilst he may bee found, call upon him whilst hee is near, *Esay.* 55. 6. Act. 17. 11.

Phil. I do see that all ignorance in matters of faith, is dangerous; but I think willful ignorance is of all other most dangerous.

Theol. Willful ignorance (no doubt) is a plain prognostication and demonstrative argument of eternal death; for it is a most horrible and fearful thing for men to refuse instruction, despise counsel, harden their hearts, stop their ears, and close up their eyes against God. This is the very upshot of our decay.

Phil. I pray you what call you hardnes of heart?

Theol. An hard heart is that which is neither moved with Gods mercies, nor feared with his judgements; neither feareth the Law, nor regardeth the Gospel; neither is holpen by threatnings, nor softned by chastisings; which is unthankful for Gods benefits, and disobedient to his commands; made cruel by his rods, and dissolute by his favours; unshamefaced to filthinesse, and fearlesse to perish; un-

courteous to men, and wretchelesse to God; forgetful of things past, negligent in things present, and improvident in things to come.

Phil. Lay forth yet more plainly the state of ignorant and hard hearted men, and shew how lamentable it is.

Theol. If a man be outwardly blind, we do pity him, and say, There goes a poor blind man, but if he be both blind and deaf, do we not more pity him, and say, Oh in how miserable a case is that man! but if he be both blind, deaf and dumb, do we not most of all pity him, and say, Oh, that man is in a most woeful taking, and in a most pitiful plight!

How much more then are they to be pitied, which as concerning their souls, are both blind, deaf, and dumb, for the diseases of the soul are far more dangerous, & more to be pitied then those of the body?

Would it not pity a mans heart to see a poor sheep in a Lyons mouth, whilst he teareth him, rendeth him, and pulls out his guts? Even such is the case of ignorant men in the claws of the Devil. For the Devil hath them under him, rendeth them at his pleasure, and teareth their souls in pieces.

Oh that we had eyes to see these things, hearts to feel them, and affections to be throughly moved with them, even unto mourning and tears!

Phil. Few do think that ignorant men are in so woful a case as you speak of; for they think ignorance will excuse them. And some will

will say, they are glad they have so little knowledge. For if they should have much knowledge of their Masters will, and do it not, they should be beaten with many stripes; but now, being ignorant, they think all is safe

Theol. God willed his people to offer sacrifice for their sins of ignorance. therefore ignorance is a sin, and excuseth no man. And as for the state of their souls before God, it is most miserable, if we could see into their souls as we see their bodies. For assuredly there be multitudes which ruffle it out in Velvets and Silks, and most brave and glittering outsides, but inwardly are full of filthiness and sin: they have fine delicate bodies, but most ugly, black and filthy souls: if a man could see into their souls, as he doth into their bodies, he would stop his nose at the stink of them. For they smell rank of sin in the Nostrils of God, his Angels, and all good men.

Phil. Then I perceive by your speech, that the case of all ignorant and profane men, is fearfull in the sight of GOD, and that all good men are to pity them, and to pray for them

Theol. If two blind and deaf men should walk in a beaten path that leads to a great deep pond, wherein they are like to be drowned if they go forwards, and two men far off should whoop unto them, and will them not to go forward lest they be drowned: yet they neither seeing any man, nor hearing any man, go forward, and

are drowned: were not this a lamentable spectacle to behold? Even so is it with all the ignorant, blind and deaf souls of the world, for they see no perils, but walk on boldly to destruction. And though the Preachers of the Gospel whoop never so loud unto them, or give them never so many warnings and caveats to take heed, yet they, being inwardly blind, see nothing; and spiritually deaf, hear nothing; and therefore go on forward in their sins and ignorance, till they suddenly fall into hell pit.

Put case also two great Armies should pitch a field, and fight a main battel upon a plain, and that some man should stand upon the top of a Mountain hard by, and behold all, and should see with his own eyes how thousands, and ten thousands went to wrack, and fell down on every side, as thick as hail, the whole plain swimming in blood: and should also hear the groaning of Souldiers wounded, and the doleful sighs and groanings of many Captains and Collonels giving up the ghost: were not this a most woful spectacle? Even so, when wee do clearly see Satan wound and murder thousand thousand souls, is it not a far more tragical and lamentable sight; and ought it not even to kill our hearts to behold it? but (alas) men have no eyes to see into these things. And yet certain it is, that Satan doth continually, and in most fearful manner; massacre innumerable souls. Thus have I shewed you the woful estate of profane and ignorant men. *Phil.*

Phil. If it be so, you that be Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel, and have taken upon you the cure and charge of souls, have need to look about you, and do what in you lieth to save souls; and, as good Shepheards, in great pitty and compassion, to labour to pull them out of the paws of the roaring Lyon, which goes about continually, seeking whom he may devour.

Theol. It standeth us upon indeed very seriously and carefully to look to it, as we will answer it at the dreadful day of judgement. For it is no small matter that we have taken in hand, which is, to care for the flock, which Christ hath bought with his blood. Would to God therefore that we would leave striving about other matters, and strive together all about this, who can pull most out of the kingdom of Satan, sin and ignorance; who can win most souls, and who can perform best service to the Church. This were a good strife indeed, and would to God that we might once at last with joyned forces go about it, and with one heart and hand joyn together to build up Gods house. If through our own follies the work hath been hindred, or any breach made, let us in wisdom and love labour to make it up again: if there have been any declining and coldnesse, let us now at last revive let us stir up our selves, that we may stir up others: let us be zealous and fervent in spirit, that we may through Gods grace put life into others, and rouze up this dead, declining and cold age wherein we

lives. So shall God be glorified, his Church edified, his Saints comforted, his people saved, his throne erected, and the Kingdom of the Devil overthrown.

Phil. What think you were the best course to effect this which you speak of?

Theol. This is a thing that must be exceedingly laboured in of us which are the Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel. And here is required diligence, and (as we say) double diligence, for the People are every where very ignorant. Some are stones altogether uncapable of instructions; others are froward and wilful; some will receive the doctrine, but not the practise; some again are altogether set upon peevishness and cavilling. So that a man had better take upon him the charge of keeping wolves and Bears, then the charge of souls. For it is the hardest thing in the world to reform mens disorders, and to bring them into order; to pull mens souls out of the Kingdom of Satan, and to bring them to God. It is as we say, an endless piece of work, and infinite toyl, a labour of all labours: I quake to think of it. For men are so obstinate and irrefragable, that they will be brought into no order, they will come under no yoak. They will not be ruled by God, nor bridled by his Word. They will follow their own swinge. They will run after their own lusts and pleasures. They will rage and storm if you go about to curb them, and restrain them of their wills, likings and liberties. They will

will have their wills, likings and liberties. They will have their wills, and follow their old fashions, say what you will, and do what you can.

Is it not, think you, a busie peece of worke to smooth and square such Timberlogs, so full of knots and knobs? Is it not a tedious and irkesome thing to think upon? And would it not kill a mans heart to go about it? Lo, how harde thing is it to bring such into frame, as are so far out of frame?

Phil. Well, Sir, you can but do your endeavour; and commit the success to God. You can but plant and water: let God give the increase. You are Ministers of the Letter, but not of the Spirit. You baptize with water, but not with the holy Ghost. If you therefore preach diligently, exhort, admonish, and reprove publickly and privately, studying by all good example of life, and seeking with all good zeal, care and conscience, to do the uttermost that in you lyeth, to reduce them from their evil wayes: I take it, you are discharged, though they remain stubborn and incorrigible. For you know what the Lord saith by his Prophet, *Ezek.* 33. 9. If you do admonish them, and give them warning, then you shall bee discharged, and their blood shall bee required at their own hands.

Theol. You have spoken the truth, and therefore, sith some must needs take upon them this so great a charge, it will be our best course, to labour much with them in Catechizing, and private Instructions,

and that in most familiar and plain manner. For much good hath been done and is done this way. The ignorant sort must be much laboured upon this way: and so no doubt much good may be done. For in all labour, there is profit. Herein we (that are the Ministers of Christ) must be content to be abased, and to teach the poor ignorant people in most plain manner; asking them many easie questions, and often questioning with them in most plain and loving manner; till we have brought them to some taste and smack of the principles of Christian Religion. We must not be ashamed to use repetitions and tautologies, and to tell them one thing twenty times over, and over again, here a line and there a line: here a little and there a little, precept upon precept, as the Prophet speaks. I know right well, nothing goes more against the stomack of a scholar, and him that is learned indeed, then to do thus. It is as irksome and tedious as to teach A, B, C. Some can at no hand endure it. But truly, truly, I find now after a long experience, that if we will do any good to these simple and ignorant souls, we must enter into this course; and we may not be ashamed of it. For it will be our crown and our glory to win souls, howsoever we be abased. Let us therefore be well content to stoop down, that Christ may be exalted: let us be abased, that God may be honoured, let us do all things in great love to Christ, who hath said, If thou lovest me, feed, feed,

Pro. 14. 23.

Isa. 28. 10.

Joh. 21. 15.

feed

feed my flock. Let us therefore testifie our love to him, by feeding his flock. Let us do all things in great love and deep compassion towards the poor souls that go astray: as it is said, that our Lord Jesus was moved to pity, & his bowels did yern to see the people as sheep without a shepherd: let it likewise move us throughly, and make our hearts to bleed, to see so many poor sheep of Christ, wandring and straying in the Mountains and wilderness of this world, caught in every bramble, and hanged in every bush, ready to be devoured of the wolf. Thus have I shewed you, what course (in my judgement) is best to be taken for the delivering of poor ignorant souls out of the captivity of Satan and sin.

Phil. Now as you have declared what course is best to be followed on your part which are Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel: so, I pray you, shew what is best to be done of us which are the people of God.

Theol. The best counsel that I can give you, if it were for my life, is to be much exercised in the Word of God, both in hearing, reading, and meditation thereof, and also to purchase unto your self, the sincere Ministry of the Gospel, and to make conscience to live under it; esteeming your self happy if you have it, though you want other things; and unhappy if you have it not, though you have all other things. For it is a pearlesse pearl, an incomparable jewel. For the purchasing wherepf, we are advised by our Lord Jesus Mar. 13 44.

sus to sell all that we have, rather then to go without it, again our Saviour Christ gives the same counsel to the Church of Laodices, in these words: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tryed by the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be cloathed, and that thy filthy nakednes do not appear; and anoint thy eyes with eye-salve, that thou maiest see. Where you see the word of God is compared to most precious gold, whereby we are made spiritually rich; and to glittering attyre, wherewith our naked souls are cloathed; and to an eye-salve, wherewith our spiritual blindnesse is cured, we are advertised also by Jesus Christ, whose counsel is ever the best, to buy these things whatsoever they cost us. The same counsel also giveth wise Salomon, saying, Buy the truth but sell it not. So then you see the counsel which herein I give you, is not of mine own but the counsel of Jesus himself, and Salomon the wise: and who can, or who dare except against their counsel?

Apoc. 3. 18.

Pro. 23. 23.

Asun. Is your meaning that men must of necessity frequent preaching of the Word? will not bare reading serve the turn?

Theol. I told you before, that reading is good, profitable and necessary, but yet it is not sufficient. We must not content our selves with that only, but we must go further, and get unto our selves the sound preaching of the Gospel, as the thickest and most principal means which God hath ordained and sanctified for the saving of men. As Satan Paul saith, When

as

as the world (by wisdom) knew not God, in the wisdome of God it pleased God, by the foolishnesse of preaching, to save them that believe. The meaning of it is, that when as men, neither by natural wisdome, nor the contemplation of the creatures, could sufficiently attain to the true knowledge of God; the Lord according to his heavenly and infinite wisdome, thought of another course, which is to save men by preaching; which the world counteth foolishnesse. And by the way, note that the preaching of the word is not a thing of humane invention, but it is Gods own device, and came first from him, and is the next and nearest way to save mens souls. 1 Cor. 1. 21.

Salomon also in the Book of the Proverbs tells thus, that the preaching of Gods word (which he calleth Vision, using the word of the Prophets, which called their Sermons Visions) is not a thing that may be spared, or that we may do at our choice, whether we have it or no: but he maketh it to be of absolute necessity unto eternal life. For he saith, Where Vision faileth, the people are left naked. So indeed it is in the Original: but the old Translation giveth us the sence thus: Where the Word of God is not preached, there the people perish. Thus you see that Salomon strikes it dead, telling us that all they which are without preaching of the word, are in exceeding great danger of losing their souls. O that men could be perswaded of this! St. Paul also saith, That faith cometh by hearing the Word preached: Pro. 29. 18. Rom. 10. 14.

for

for the faith. How can they hear without a Preacher? If faith cometh by hearing the word preached, then I reason thus: No preaching, no faith: no faith, no Christ: no Christ, no eternal life; for eternal life is onely in him. Let us then put them together thus: Take away the word, take away faith: take away faith, take away Christ: take away Christ, and take away eternal life. So then it followes: Take away the Word, and take away eternal life. Or we may read them backward, thus: if we will have Heaven, we must have Christ: if we will have Christ, we must have faith: if we will have faith, we must have the word preached. Then it followeth thus: If we will have Heaven, we must have the word preached. Then I conclude, that preaching generally, and for the most part, is of absolute necessity unto eternal life, as meat is of absolute necessity for the preservation of our bodies, as graffe and fodder are of absolute necessity for the upholding of the life of beasts, and water of absolute necessity for the life of fishes. Then this being so, men are with great care and conscience to hear the Gospel preached, to frequent Sermons, to resort much to Gods house and habitation, where his honour dwelleth, with David to say, One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I require, even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the daies of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to visit his holy Temple. With godly Mary to say, One thing

Psa. 27. 4.

Luk. 10 42.

thing is necessary, and to chuse the better part. With the poor Cripple at Bethesda, to wait for the moving of the waters by the Angel, that his impotency may be cured. I mean, that we should tye our selves to the first moving of the spiritual waters of life, by the Preachers of the Gospel, that our spiritual impotency may be holpen and relieved. For the ministery of the Gospel is that Golden Pipe whereby, and where-through all the fewnesse of God, all the sweetnesse of Christ, and all heavenly graces whatsoever, are derived unto us. Which thing was shadowed in the Law, by the pomegranates in the skirts of Aarons garments, and the golden Bells between them round about; that is, a golden Bell and a Pomegranate, a golden Bell and a Pomegranate. The golden Bells did signifie the preaching of the Gospel, and the Pomegranates the sweet savour of Christs death. Noting thereby, that the sweet savour of Christs death, and all the benefits of his passion, should be spread abroad by the preaching of the Gospel. Thus you see, that if men ever purpose to be saved, they must make more account of the Preaching of the Gospel then they have done, and not think (as most men do) that they may be without it, and yet do well enough: and some have as little to be without it, as have it; for it doth but disquiet them, and trouble their consciences: but woe unto such.

Joh. 5. 7.

Exo. 28. 33.

Phil. Yet we see where the Word is soundly preached, there be many bad people: and the

the reasons thereof, in mine opinion, are two: The one, that God taketh his holy Spirit from many in hearing the Word, so that their hearing is made unfruitful: The other, that the Devil hath an hundred devices to hinder the effectual working of the Word, so as it shall do no good at all, nor take any effect in multitudes of men. But you, Master *Theologus*, can better lay open this matter than I, I pray you therefore speak something of it.

Theol. The sleights of Satan in this behalf, are more, and more fine, than I or any man else can possibly discover. For who is able to descry, or in sufficient manner to lay open the deep subtilties & most secret and sinful suggestions of the Devil in the hearts of men? He is so cunning a crafts-master this way, that none can perfectly trace him. His workings in the hearts of men are with such close and hidden deceits, and most methodical and crafty conveyances, that none can sufficiently find them out. But yet notwithstanding, I will bewray unto you so much as I know, or can conceive of his dealings with them that hear the Word, that he may steal it out of their hearts, and make it fruitless and unprofitable. First of all he bestirreth him, and labours hard to keep all men fast asleep in their sins, that they may have no care at all of their own salvation, & therefore dissuadeth them from hearing or reading the Word at all, lest they should be awaked. If this will not prevail, but that they must needs hear, then his craft is to make their hearing ir-

unprofitable, by sleepinesse, dulnesse, by thoughts, conceitednesse, and a thousand such like. If this will not serve the turn, but that the Word doth get within them, and worke upon them, (so as thereby they grow to some knowledge and understanding of the truth) then he practiseth another way, which is, to make them rest themselves upon their bare knowledge, and so become altogether conscienceless. If this will not suffice, but that men fall to doing, and leave some sins, especially the grosse sins of the world, and do some good, then he perswadeth them to trust to those doings without Christ, and to think themselves well enough, because they do some good, and leave some evil. If this be not enough, but that men attain unto the true justifying faith, which apprehendeth Christ, and resteth upon his merits, then he deviseth how to blemish the beauty of their faith, and weaken their comfort through many frailties and wants; yea, grosse downfalls and rank evils; so as they shall be but spotted and leprous Christians. If this weapon will not worke, but that Christians do joyn all good vertues with their faith, and abundantly shine forth in all the fruits of righteousnesse, then he casteth about another way, which is, to daunt and damp them with discouragements; as poverty, necessity, sicknesse, reproaches, contempt, persecutions, &c. If none of all these will do the deed, but that men constantly believe in Christ, and patiently and joyfully endure

endure all afflictions, then his last refuge is, to blow them up with gun-powder: that is, to puff them up with a pride of their gifts, graces, and strength, and so to give them an utter overthrow whilst they do not walk humbly, and give God the praise of his gifts.

Thus have you a little taste of Satans cunning; in making the Word unfruitful amongst us.

Asun. I pray you, good Sir, (seeing I am ignorant and unlearned) give me some particular directions out of the word of God, for the good guiding and ordering of my particular actions, in such sort as that I may glorifie God in the earth, and after this life be glorified of him for ever.

Theol. It were an infinite thing to enter into all particulars; but briefly do this: First, seek God earnestly in his word, pray much, in all things give thanks, eschew evil, and do good; fear God, & keep his Commandments; reform your self and your household; love vertue, and vertuous men; keep company with the godly, and avoid the society of the wicked. Live soberly, justly, and holily in this present evil world. Speak alwaies graciously, and beware of filthy communication. Recompence no man evil for evil, but recompence evil with good. Be courteous and pitiful towards all men. Take heed of swearing, cursing, and banning. Beware of anger, wrath, and bitternesse. Praise your friend openly, reprove him secretly. Speak no evil of them that are

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absent, nor of the dead. Speak evil of no man, speak always the best, or at least not the worst. Reverence Gods Name, and keep his Sabbaths. Avoid all the signs of condemnation, and labour after all the signs of salvation. Above all things take heed of sin, for that is the very cut-throat of the soul, and of all goodness. Tremble therefore and sin not; for if you sin, mark what followeth:

God saith: His Angels bear witnesse: The conscience pricketh: Death threatneth: The Devil accuseth: Hell devoureth. Six great dangers in sin.

You see then that sin is no scar-crow or jesting matter. Every sin that a man committeth, is as a thorn thrust deep into the soul, which will not be got out again, but with many a sigh, and many a sorrowful Oh, oh, Every sin is written with a pen of Iron, and the point of a Diamond upon the conscience, and shall in the last day (when the Book shall be opened) accuse us, and give in evidence against us. Jer. 17. 1.

If a man commit sin with pleasure, the pleasure passeth away, but the conscience and sting of the sin abideth, and tormenteth deadly; but if a man do well, though with labour and painfulnesse, the pain passeth away, yet the conscience of well doing remaineth with much comfort. What the best cure of sin is always repentance; if not in this life, then with woe and alas when it is too late. Therefore take heed in time; take heed, I say, of sin: for Note, this.

Sin hardens the heart, Heb. 3, 13.

Sin

Six most hurtful effects of sin.

Sin gnaws the conscience, 1 Sam. 25.
Sin fights against the soul, 1 Pet. 1. 11.
Sin brings forth death, Jam. 1. 15.
Sin makes ashamed, Rom. 6. 21.
Sin procures plagues of body or soul. Deut. 28.

Behold therefore the evil effects of sin. For this cause Zophar the Naamathite speaks very wisely to Job, saying, When thou shalt lift thy face out of thy sin, thou shalt be strong, and shalt not fear: thou shalt forget al sorrow, thou shalt remember it as the waters that are past. Where Zophar plainly sheweth, that the adoyding of sin is our strength, and the committing of it, our weakening: according to that of Salomon, The way of the Lord is the strength of the upright man. Therefore walk in the way of GOD, and take heed of the ways of sin; for GOD punisheth every sin his way, some one way, and some another; and no sin can escape unpunished. For because God is just, therefore he must needs punish sin in all men, though in divers manners; as the wicked in their own persons, the godly in Christ. Beware of it therefore, and flatter not your self in your sins. Remember how every disobedience, and every transgression hath had a just recompence of reward. God hath in all ages matched the cause with the effect: that is, sin with the punishment of sin. The Israelites, for breaking the first Commandment, in making other Gods, were often smitten by the hand of God. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, for

Job 11. 15. 16.

Pro. 10. 29.

Note how God in all ages hath punished the breakers of his law.

Exod. 32. 30.

for the breach of the Second Commandment, in offering strange fire upon Gods Altar, were consumed with fire. He that blasphemed and transgressed the Third Commandment, was stoned to death. He that brake the fourth Commandment, in gathering sticks on the Sabbath, was likewise stoned. Absolom transgressing the fifth, was hanged in his own hair. Cain transgressing the sixth, in slaying his brother Abel, was branded with the mark of Gods wrath. Sichem the son of Hamor, transgressing the seventh, in defiling Dinah the Daughter of Jacob, was slain by Simeon and Levi the Sons of Jacob. Achan sinning against the eighth Commandment, in stealing the wedge of gold, and the Babylonish garment, was stoned to death. Ananias and Saphira sinning against the ninth, in lying and dissembling, were suddenly smitten with death. Ahab transgressing the tenth Commandment, in coveting and discontentment, was devoured of Dogs. Or if you will have original sin therein onely forbidden, then Infants are therefore punished with death, Rom. 5. 14.

Lev. 10. 2. Levit. 24. 14. Numb. 15. 32. 2 Sam. 18. 9. Gen. 4. 15. Gen. 34. 26. Jos. 7 25. Acts 5. 10. 1 Kings 21. 24.

Thus we see there is no dallying with GOD; but if we sin, we are as sure to be jerkt for it, as the coat is on our back. Therefore let us not deceive our selves, nor make light of sin, for sin is no scar-bug, and we shall one day find it so. And howsoever we make light of some sins, yet in very deed all sin is odious in the sight of GOD; yea, all sin is hainous

hainous and capital in this respect, that it is against a person of infinite being, it is against GOD himself, it is against the highest Majesty. For the greatness of the person offended, both inhanses and increase the greatness of the sin.

As for example: If a man rail at a Justice of peace, he shall be stocked: if he rail at one of his Majesties privy Councel, he shall be imprisoned: but if he rail at his own Majesty, he shall be hanged. So then you see how a sin is encreased by the dignity of the person offended. Now then, (all mortal Princes are but dust in the sight of God, (and he is a person of infinite and incomparable Majesty) how hainous & how flagitious a thing is it, in any wise, or after any sort to sin against his most royal and sacred person? Well then, to grow to some conclusion, this I do advise you; as to shun all vice, so to imbrace all vertue; as to put off the old man, so to put on the new man. Remember often and alwaies, what shall become of you after this life, whether you shall be forty years hence in Hell or heaven. Look well to that in time; and therefore so live, that you may live alwaies. Consider often in your serious cogitation.

Nine profitable Considerations.

1. What you have been: what you are: what you shall be: what God hath done for you: what he doth: what he will do: Gods judgments past: Gods judgements present: Gods judgements to come.

Awake at last, and take care for your salvation. Sleep no longer in sin, lest you perish

perish eternally. For verily there is a reward for the righteous: doubtless there is a God that judges the earth. **And this is the best counsel I can give you.** Psa. 58. 11.

Asin. Your counsel is very good. I pray God give me grace to follow it, and so to live, that I may please God, and go to heaven in the end.

Theol. **You must take heed you speak not these words of course, and for fashion sake, having no settled purpose in your heart to follow these directions. For there be numbers that can skill to give good words, but they will do nothing. They think they highly please God with their good words, and that God will take them for payment, as though God regarded words. They would fain go to Heaven, but they will take no pains, they will leave no sins, they will not forego their lusts and pleasures. They would have the reward of Gods Children, but they will not do the works of Gods Children. They would have the sweet, but they will none of the sowre. They would have the crown, but they will fight never a stroke. They would fain come to Canaan, but they are loth to travel that long and dangerous way which leadeth unto it. Therefore those men being the Sons of idleness, will step short (in the end) of that they look for. For the Spirit saith,** The sluggard lusts, but his soul hath nought. **We must therefore leave bare words, and come to deeds. For our Lord Jesus saith,** Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter in- This is most mens ease. Pro. 13. 4. Mat. 7. 21.

into the kingdome of heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven: where we see Christ (in plain terms) excludes out of his kingdom all those whose Religion consisteth onely in good words, and smooth speeches; but make no conscience to practise the Commandments of God.

David, having made some good preparation for the building of the Temple, and perceiving his son Salomon to have stuff and provision enough to perfect and finish it, doth most wisely encourage him to the work in these words: Up and be doing, and the Lord shall be with thee. Oh that men would follow this counsel of David, that they would up and be doing, and not sit still and do nothing; that they would leave words & countenances, and set upon the practise of Gods Law, and study with all care and conscience to be obedient to his will. Then assuredly God would be with them, and bless them, and much good would come of it. For the Scripture saith, In all labour there is profit or increase: but the talk of the lips onely bringeth want.

1 Chr. 29. 20.

Prov. 14. 23.

Phil. Most mens minds are so wholly drowned in the love of this world, that they have no heart to obey God, nor any delight in his Commandments.

Theol. The greatest part of men are like the Gadarens, which esteemed their swine more then Christ. As we see in these our days, how many make more account of their kine and sheep, then of the most glorious

glorious Gospel of Christ. They highly esteem dung, and contemn pearl. They are careful for trifles, and regard not the things of greatest moment; and therefore may fitly be compared to a man, who having his wife and children very sick, doth utterly neglect them, and is altogether careful for the cuting of his hogs ears.

Phil. We are somewhat digressed from the matter we had in hand: I pray you therefore, if you have any more matter of good counsel to give to *Asunetus*, that you would presently deliver it.

Theol. I have little more to say, save onely I would advise him often to remember, and to muse on these things.

Nine things much to be thought on.

The evil he hath committed.
The good he hath omitted.
The time that he hath mis-spent.
The shortness of this life.
The vanity of this world.
The excellency of the world to come.
Death, then the which nothing is more terrible.
The day of judgement, then the which nothing is more fearful.
Hell-fire, then the which nothing is more intollerable.

Phil. This is short and sweet indeed. You have touched some of these points before, in this our conference. But I am very desirous to hear somewhat more of the two last, which yet have not been spoken of.

Theol. With you are desirous, I will briefly deliver unto you that which I have received from the Lord. First con-

cerning the day of judgment. I find in the volume of Gods Book, that it shall be very terrible and dreadful. For, The Son of man
Mat. 24 30. shall come in the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory. St. Peter saith, The
2 Pet. 3. 10. day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night, in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a noise, the elements shall melt with heat, and the earth, with the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. The Apostle telleth us, that at Christs coming the whole world shall be of a light fire; and that all Castles, Towers, goodly Buildings, Gold, Silver, Velvet, Silks, and all the glittering hue, glory and beauty of this world, shall be consumed to powder and ashes. For he saith plainly, The heavens and the earth which are now, are reser-
2 Pet. 3. 7. ved to fire against the day of judgment, and of the destruction of ungodly men. Moreover, he strongly proves, that as the world was once destroyed by water, so the second time, in the end thereof, it shall be destroyed with fire. The Apostle Saint Paul witnesseth the same things; for he saith, Christ shall come from heaven, with
2 Thes. 1. 7. all his mighty Angels, in flaming fire. And in another place he notes the terrour of his coming to judgement, saying, He shall
1 Thes. 4. 16. come with a shout, with the voice of the Arch-Angel, and the Trumpe of God. We see by experience, that the coming of mortal Princes to any place, is with great pomp and glory. They have great trains and troups behind them and before them. They are accompanied with many Nobles:

bles: gaudy Lords, and gallant Ladies do attend upon them. The Sword-bearer, Trumpeters, and Hardingers, go before: many flaunting and stately Personages follow after. Now then, if the coming of mortal Princes be so pompous and glorious; how much more glorious shall the coming of the Son of man be, in whose sight all mortal Princes are but dust? The Scriptures do affirm, that his second coming unto judgment shal be with such resplendent and unspeakable glory, that even the most excellent creatures shall blush at it. For the Sun shall be darkned; the Moon shall not give her light; and the Stars shall fall from heaven. Mat. 24. 29. Meaning thereby, that the most glorious and bright-shining Creatures shall be clouded and obscured by the unconceivable brightnesse of Christs coming.

Moreover, the terrour of Christs coming is noted unto us in this, that immediately before it, the very Sea shall quake and tremble, and in his kind cry out. For it is said, that The Sea shall roar, (and make a noyse in most doleful and lugubrious manner) and mens hearts shall fail them for fear, and for looking after those things which shall come on the world; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. Luk. 21 25. O what shall become of Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers and such like, in that day! They shall seek to creep into an anger-hole to hide their heads. They shall then cry Wo and alas that ever they were born. They shall wish that they had

neuer beẽ borne, or that their mothers had borne them toads. And as it is in the Apocalypse, They shall say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the presence of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand?

We see therefore, that the coming of Christ shall not be base and contemptible, as in his first visitation: but it shall bee most terrible, princely, and glorious. And as the Scriptures do affirm, that his coming shall bee with great terrour and dread; so also they do shew, that it shall be very sudden and unlooked for. For, the day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night; as the travel that cometh upon a woman. As a snare it shall come on all them that dwell on the face of the earth: That is, it shall suddenly catch and intangle all men, whatsoever they bee in the world. As the earthquake which was neer ninety years agone, did suddenly take the world tardy, they not thinking of any such matter: So shall the coming of the Son of man to judgment take the world tardy & unprepared: for few there be that think of any such matter. With therefore the second appearing of Christ shall bee with such suddennesse, let us fear & tremble; for all sudden things are to be feared.

2 Pet. 3. 10. 1 Thes. 5. 2. Luk. 21 35.

Phil. Well, Sir, as you have shewed the terror and suddennesse of Christs coming, so shew us the purpose and end of his coming.

Theol The principle end of his coming

ing, shall be to keep a general audit, to call all men to an account, to have a reckoning of every mans particular actions, and to reward them according to their deeds: as it is written, The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his Angels, and then he shall give to every man according to his deeds. Mat. 16 27. Again, the Apostle saith to the Corinthians, Wee must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every man may receive the things which are done in his body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or evil. 2 Cor. 5. 10.

Here we do plainly see, that the end of Christs coming shall be to judge every man according to his works; that is, as his works shall declare him, and testifie of him, and of his faith. In another place the Apostle saith, that the end of his coming shall be to render vengeance unto them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting perdition from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Woe then unto two sorts of men, the ignorant, and the disobedient: For the Apostle saith flatly, they both shall be damned. Methinks both the ignorant and disobedient, and all other prophane men, should tremble to think of this, that Christ shall come to render vengeance unto them. If we did certainly know that a forraign enemy should invade our Nation, over-run it, & make a conquest of it, that he should shed our blood, destroy us, and make a massacre 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9.

amongst us; yea, that we should see our wives, our children, our kindred, and dear friends slain before our faces, so as their blood should stream in the streets, what a wonderful fear and terror would it strike into us? we would quake to think of it. Shall we not then be much more afraid of the damnation of our souls? shall we not quake to think that Christ shall come to take vengeance? If the Lyon roar, all the beasts of the field tremble: and shall not we be afraid of the roaring of the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah? But alas, we are so hart-hearted, and so rockt asleep in the cradle of security, that nothing can move us, nothing can awake us.

Phil. Now as you have shewed us the terror and end of Christs coming; so also declare the manner.

Theol. The manner of it is this: that the whole world shall be cited to appear personally, at the general Assizes, before the great Judge. No man shall be admitted to appear by his Attorney, but all must appear personally. None shall be suffered to put in sureties: but all must come in their own persons, without bayl or mainprise; as it is written, Wee must all appear, high and low, rich and poor, king and beggar, one and another; as it is plainly set down in the twentieth chapter of the Revelations, where the Spirit saith, I saw the dead both great and small stand before God; and the Sea gave up the dead which were in her, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them. So

then

then it is clear, that all, without exception, shall make their appearance at the great and dreadful Assizes. O what a great day will that be, when as the whole world shall appear together at once! If a King marry his son, and bid other Kings, Emperours, Dukes and Nobles to the marriage, with all their pomp and train, we use to say, O what a Marriage, what a meeting, what ado, what a great day will there be? But when the universal world shall be assembled together, not onely all Monarches, Kings and Princes, but all other, that ever have been from the beginning of the world, all that are, and shall be, what a day will that be? No marvel therefore, though the Scriptures call it the day of God, and the great day of the Lord. Now then, when all flesh is come together, to make their personal appearance, then shall the Son of God ascend unto his Tribunal Seat, with great majesty and glory. For A fiery stream shall issue and come forth before him: thousand thousand Angels shall accompany him, and minister unto him; and ten thousand thousand shall stand before him; the judgment shall be set, and the books opened. All the Saints also, and true worshippers of God shall attend him, and accompany him unto his judgement seat. And not onely so, but they shall sit upon the Bench and Throne with him: as it is written, 1 Cor. 6. 2. The Saints shall judge the world: they shall judge the Angels: That is, the Devils, the Angels of darkness. Our Lord

Jesus himself did avouch the same thing, when he said to his Disciples, and in them to all true Christians, Verily I say unto you, that when the Son of man shall sit in
Mat. 19 28. the Throne of his Majesty, ye which followed me in the regeneration, shall sit upon twelve Thrones, and judge the twelve Tribes of Israel: That is, the Saints of God shall bear witness that the judgment of Christ, and sentence of condemnation which he passeth against all unbelievers, is according to justice and equity. Thus then we see how Christ shall bee accompanied to his Throne, and with what glory and majesty he shall ascend unto it. Experience teacheth, that when mortal Judges hold their Sessions and general Assizes, they are brought unto the Bench and Judgement-seat with pomp and terrour. For the Sheriff of the Shire, and Halberd-men, with many Justices of Peace, and traines of others, do accompany them unto the Bench. Then with how much more glory and majesty shall the Son of God be brought unto his Royal Throne? Thus then, Christ being set upon his Judgement-seat, all the ungodly shall be convented before him, and he shall stand over them with a naked sword in his hand; the Devil shall stand by them on the one side to accuse them, and their own consciences on the other side, and the gaping gulph of hell underneath them, ready to devour them. Then shall the books be opened; not any books of paper & parchment, but the books of mens consciences: for

every

every mans sins are written and recorded in his conscience, as it were in a Register book: Then will God bring every work to judgement, with every secret thought, & set them in order before all the reprobates. Then will God lighten the things that are hid in darkness: and make the counsels of the heart manifest. 1 Cor. 4.5. **Then shall all the ungodly be arraigned, convicted, and held up their hands at the Bar of Christs Tribunal Seat, and shall cry, guilty. Then shall that most dreadful sentence of death and condemnation be pronounced against them by the most righteous Judge,** Goe cursed into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels. Mat. 25. 41. **O doleful sentence! O heavy hearing! Whose heart doth not tremble at these things? Whose hair doth not stand up on their heads? For then shall thousands, which in this world have flourished as the Cedars of Lebanus, be cast down for evermore, and shall drink (as a just recompence for their iniquity) of the bitter cup of Gods eternal wrath & indignation, in the kingdome of darkness, and in the fearful presence of Satan, and all the cursed enemies of Gods grace.**

Phil. Well, now as you have declared unto us the terror, the suddenness, the end, and the manner of Christs coming to judgement; so lastly, shew us the right use of all these things.

Theol. **St. Peter telleth and teacheth us the right use of all: for, saith he,** Seeing all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to bee in holy conversa- 2 Pet. 3. 11.

and godlineſs? As if he ſhould ſay, Sith the heavens ſhall paſs away with a noiſe, the elements ſhall melt with heat, and the earth with the works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up: ſith alſo the coming of Chriſt ſhall be with great terrour, to a fearful end, and in a fearful manner: O how ought we to excel in godneſſe? So then, Saint Peter telleth us, that the true uſe of all is this; that hereby wée bée brought nearer unto God, even to be more obedient to his will, and to walk in all his commandments, making conſcience of all our waies, and ſtudying to pleaſe God in all things, and to be fruitful in all good works, living ſoberly, juſtly, and holily in this preſent evil world, and ſhewing forth the vertues of him which hath called us out of darkneſs to this marvellous light: that ſo we may be prepared againſt the day of his appearing, that it may not take us tardy. For our life ought to be a continual meditation of death: we ſhould alwaies live as if we ſhould dye, or that our bed ſhould be our grave: we muſt live continually as if Chriſt ſhould come to judgement preſently, as it is reported of a godly man in the Primitive Church that whether he ate or drank, or whatſoever he did, he thought alwaies he heard the trumpet of the Lord, with theſe words, Ariſe ye dead, and come to judgement. But caſe it were certainly known, that Chriſt would come to judgement, the next Midſummer day; O what an alteration would it make in the world! how would men change

their

their minds and affections? who would care for this world? who would set his heart upon riches? who would regard brave apparel? who durst deceive or oppresse? who durst be drunk? who durst swear, lye, and commit adultery? May, would not all men give up themselves to the obedience of God? would not all serve him diligently? would not all men and women flock to Sermons? would they not give up themselves to prayer and reading? would they not repent them of their sins? would they not cry for mercy & forgiveness? See then what the knowledge of a certain day approaching would effect. And ought we not to do all these things with as great care and zeal, seeing the day is uncertain? For who knoweth whether Christ will come this moneth or the next, this year or the next? He himself saith, Be ready, watch, for in the hour that yee think not of, will the Son of man come. We think he will not come this year, nor next year, nor this hundred years. It may be therefore that he will come suddenly upon us, we know not how soon: For in an hour that we little think of, will he come. Therefore our Saviour saith in the thirteenth Chapter of Mark, Verse 33. Take heed, watch and pray; for you know not when the time is. And in the Gospel of St. Luke, he saith, Take heed that your hearts be not overcome with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and the cares of this life; and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come up

Mat. 24. 44

Luke 21 34, 35.

on all them that dwell upon the face of the earth. We hear therfore how many watchwords & cabeats our Saviour giveth us, when he saith, Be in readiness, awake, take heed, watch and pray, and look about you, lest that day come suddenly upon you, and take you napping. It standeth us all therefore upon, to be at an hours warning, upon pain of death, and as we will answer it at our uttermost peril.

Phi. Proceed to speak of the torments of Hell.

Theol. Concerning the torments of hell: I do note three things, which I will briefly speak of, and they be these: The extremity, perpetuity, and remedilesnesse thereof: First, touching the extremity thereof, it standeth specially in these three things: First, that it is a separation from all Joy and Comfort of the Presence of God. Secondly, that it is an eternal fellowship with the Devil and his Angels. Thirdly, it is a feeling of the horrible wrath of God, which shall seize upon body and soul, and shall feed on them (as fire doth upon pitch and brimstone) for ever. The Scriptures doth note the extremity of it, in calling it, A lake that burns with fire and brimstone for ever: in saying, There shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth: in affirming, that their worm dyeth not; (meaning the sworm that gnaweth their conscience, or the torment of conscience) and the fire never goeth out: in terming it, Topher, which is deep and large, and the burning thereof is fire and much wood:

Apoc. 21. 8. Luk. 13 28. Mat. 8. 12.

wood: and that the breath of the Lord, as a river of brimstone, doth kindle it. All these things be terrible to our senses, and yet can they not fully express the thing as it is indeed. For no heart can conceive, or tongue expresse, the greatness and extremity of the torments of Hell. As the joyes of Heaven never entred into the heart of man; no more did the torments of Hell. All the torments and troubles that fall upon men in this life, are but the sparkles of the furnace of Gods total wrath. All fires are but as it were pictures of fire, in comparison of Hell-fire. For as one writeth. Hell-fire is so extreamly hot, that it will burn up a man seven miles before he come at it. Yet the Reprobates, being alwaies in it, shall never be consumed of it. As the Salamander is alwaies in the fire, and never consumeth: so the wicked shall be always in the fire of Hell, and never consume. For Hell is a death alwaies living, and an end alwaies begining. It is a grievous thing to a man that is very sick, to lye along upon a feather-bed how much more upon a hot gridiron? but how most of all to burn alwaies in hel fire, & never be consumed? Another extremity of it consisteth in this, that the torments of Hell are universal; that is, in every member at once, head, eyes, tongue, teeth, throat, stomack, back, belly, heart sides, &c. All punishments of this life are particular: for some are pained in their head, some in back, some in stomack, &c. yet some particular

pains

paines are such as a man would not suffer to gain all the world. But for a man to be tormented in all parts at once, what sight more lamentable? who could but take pity of a Dog in the street in that case? Thus then we see, that the extremity of Hell torments is greater then can be conceived or uttered. For who can utter that which is incomprehensible? we can go no further in comprehending that which is incomprehensible, then to know it to be incomprehensible.

Phil. As you have shewed us the extremity of Hell torments, so now proceed to the perpetuity.

Theol. The Scriptures do set forth the perpetuity of Hell torments, in saying, they are for ever. The wicked shall be cast into the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever. The fire never goeth out. When as many hundred thousand years are expired, as there be stones by the Sea side, yet still there be so many more to come. For that which hath no end, can never come to an end. If all the Arithmeticians in the world were set a work, to do nothing but number all the days of their life, even the greatest numbers that they could possibly set down, and should in the end add all their numbers together, yet could they never come any thing near to that length of time wherein the wicked shall be tormented. If the whole circumference of the Heavens were written about with figures of Arithmetick, from the East to the West, and

and from the West to the East again; yet could it not contain that infinite time, and innumerable years, wherein all unbelievers shall suffer eternal torture. For in things infinite, time hath no place. For time is the measure of those things which are subject to measure. Therefore because Hell torments are infinite, they cannot be measured by any time; neither can that which is infinite be diminished. For if you substract from that which is infinite, ten thousand thousand millions of millions, yet is it thereby nothing diminished, or made lesse.

Put case a man should once in an hundred thousand years take a spoonful of water out of the great Ocean Sea, how long would it be ere he had so emptied it? Yet shall a man sooner empty the Sea, by taking a spoonful once in an hundred thousand years, then the damned soul shall have any ease. Therefore a certain Writer saith, If the damned soul might bee tormented in Hell but a thousand years, and then have ease, there were some comfort in it: (for then there would be hope it would come to an end) but, saith he, this word *Ever*, killeth the heart. O consider this, ye that forget God, O yee carnal Worldlings, think on this in time. For if you will not now be moved in hearing, you shall then be crushed in pieces in feeling. What availeth it to live in all possible pleasures and carnal delights here for some sixty years, and then to suffer this eternal torment? What shall it profit a man

to

to win the whole world, and lose his soul? **They be more then mad, which will hazard their soul for a little profit, and a few stinking pleasures. But this is the manner of men: they will have the present sweet, (come of it what will) though they pay never so dear for it, though they go to the highest price: though they lose their souls for it. Oh the unspeakable blindenesse and madnesse of the men of this world! The Devil hath put out their eyes, & therefore leadeth them whither he lists. For who cannot lead a blinde man whether he lists?** Nahash **the** Ammonite **would** 1. Sam. 11. 2. **make no covenant with the** Israelites, **but upon condition that he might put out all their right eyes. So the Devil doth covenant with all the wicked, to put out both their eyes, that he may lead them directly into Hell.**

Phil. Now, Sir, a word or two more of the remedilesnes of Hell-fire.

Theol. **The Scriptures do affirm, that as the torments of Hell are extream, so they are without all hope of remedy: as it is written,** A man can by no means redeem his Psa. 49. 7. 8. brother; hee cannot give his ransome unto God; so pretious is the redemption of the soul, and the continuance forever. **To this purpose Abraham said to the rich man, being in Hell-torments,** Betwixt you and us Luk. 16. 26. there is a great gulph set, so that they which would go from hence to you, cannot; neither can they come from thence to us. **Our Lord Jesus also saith,** What shall a man Mat. 16 16. give for the recompence of his soul? **Where-**

our

our Saviour doth plainly affirm, that there is no ransome or recompence though never so great, to be given for a damned soul. For the soul being in Hell can never be released, it is past remedy, no means whatsoever can do any good; no gold, no silver, no friends, no riches, no power, no policy, no flattery, no bribery, no reach, no fetch or device whatsoever, can prevail one jot: for a man being once in Hell, hath no remedy; hee is in close prison, he is shut up under the hatches for ever; there is no getting out again; hee must suffer perpetual imprisonment. Hee cannot bring a Writ of false imprisonment, because he is laid in by the most righteous and just Judge, who cannot possibly do any wrong, but he must lye by it. For being there once, he is there for ever. If all the Angels of Heaven should intreat for a damned soul; if Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, should make great suit; if all the Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, should be continual solicitors to Christ for release; if the father should make request for his son, or the mother for the daughter, yet can none of these be heard; they must all have the repulse. For the sentence of Christ cannot be reversed, his decree is unrepealable. The due consideration of all these things may make all hearts to quake, all knees to tremble. In the troubles and afflictions of this life, though a man come in never so great danger, yet he may wind out again by one means or another, by mony, or friendship, or rewards,

or

or such like means: but in Hell fire, this it is that gripes and maketh the heart despair, that there is no remedy at all to be used. If we should ask of a damned soul, or an afflicted conscience, what they would give for the ease and redemption of their souls, they would answer, The whole world: howsoever secure worldlings and wicked Atheists (which see nothing, or feel nothing) make nothing of it.

Here, by the way, let us consider the greatness of the loss of mans soul; which we shall the better perceive and see into, if we can aright value and prize the soul. If therefore it be demanded, what is the price of the soul, or what is it worthy? Our Lord Jesus answereth, that it is more worth then all the world. For, saith he, What shall it profit a man to win all the world, and lose his soul? Therefore the soul of the poorest begger is more worth then all the world. Thus I reason thus: If the soul be more worth then all the world, then the losse of it is greater then the losse of the whole world. For indeed it is a losse of all losses, an unrecoverable losse. If a man should have his house burnt over his head, and all that he hath consumed in one night, it were a great losse. If a Merchant-venturer should lose twenty thousand pounds in one venture, in one ship, or (as they say) in one bottom, it were a very great losse. If a King should lose his Crown and Kingdom, it were an exceeding great losse. But the losse of the soul is

Mat. 16 26.

a thousand times more then all these, it is a matter of infinite importance. If a Tenant be cast out of the favour of his Land lord, it is a matter of grief. If a Noble mans Secretary be cast out of favour with his Lord, so that he taketh a pitch against him, it is a matter of great sorrow. If a Noble man himself be discountenanced, and cast out of all favour with his Prince, that was in great favour, it is a cosse, a heart smart, and a matter of exceeding grievance. But to be eternally separated from God, to be shut out of his favour, and to be cast away from his presence, and the presence of his Angels, is a matter of infinite more dolour and torment. Mark then and behold what a thing it is for a man to lose his soul. Oh therefore that men would be wise in Gods fear, that they would look out in time, and make provision for their souls. Now then, to close up this whole point: the summ of all that hath been said is this, That the torments of Hell are endlesse, easelesse and remedilesse.

Asun. The laying open of these doctrines of Hell fire, and the judgement to come, makes me quake and tremble: I am much thereby perplexed, I feel great terrour in my conscience, I am afraid I shall be damned.

Antil. Damned, man! what speak you of damning? I am ashamed to hear you say so. For it is well known that you are an honest man, a quiet liver, a good neighbour, and as good a towns-man as any in the Parish where you dwell, and you have been alwaies so reputed

puted and taken. If you should be damned I know not who shall be saved.

Asun. I regard not your flatteries. I believe God, I beleive his Word; I believe those things which Master *Theologus* hath alledged out of the holy Scriptures, pointing me both to the Chapter and the Verse: and whether it bee more meet that I should believe the Scriptures, or your soothings, judge you. No, no; now I do clearly see, by the glass of Gods Law, that my state is wretched and miserable. For I have lived in sin and ignorance all the days of my life, being utterly void of all Religion and true knowledge of God. I am not the man indeed that you and others take me for. For though outwardly I have lived honestly to the world-ward, yet inwardly I have not lived religiously to God-ward.

Anstl. Tush, tush, now I see you are in a melancholly humour. If you will go home with me, I can give you a speedy remedy, for I have many pleasant and merry books, which if you should hear them read, would soon remedy you of this melancholly humour. I have the Court of *Venus*, The Palace of pleasure, *Bevis* of *South-hampton*, *Ellen* of *Rummin*, The merry jest of the Fryer and the boy, The pleasant story of *Clem* of the *Clough*, *Adam Bell*, and *William* of *Cloudesly*, The old tale of *William*, *Richard* and *Humphry*, The pretty conceit of *John Splinters* last Will and Testament; which all are excellent and singular books against heart-qualms, and to remove such dumpishness as I see you are now fallen into.

Asun.

Asun. Your vain and frivolous books of tales, jests, and lies, would more increase my grief, and strike the print of sorrow deeper into my heart.

Antil. Nay, if you be of that minde, I have done with you.

Phil. I pray you, if a man may be so bold with you, how came you by all these good books? I should have said, so much trash and rubbish.

Antil. What mattereth it to you? What have you to do to inquire? But, I pray you, Sir, what do you mean to call them trash and rubbish?

Phil. Because they be no better. They be goodly geere, trim stuff! They are good to kindle a fire, or to scoure an hot Oven withal. And shall I tell you my opinion of them? I do thus think, That they are devised by the Devil, seen and allowed by the Pope, printed in Hel, bound up by Hobgoblin, and first published and dispersed in *Rome*, *Italy*, and *Spain*; and all to this end, that thereby men might be kept from the reading of the Scriptures. For even as a Lapwing with her busie cry draweth men away from her nest, so the Popish generation, by these fabulous devices, draw men from the Scriptures.

Antil. Ah, Sir, I see now a fools bolt is soon shot. You are more precise then wise. The Vicar of Saint Fools shall be your ghostly Father. What tell you me of your opinion? I would you should well know, I neither regard you nor your opinion. There be wiser men then you, who both read, allow, and take pleasure in these books.

Theol-

Theol. Let him alone, good Philagathus, for you see what he is, there is no end of his crossing and cavilling. But he that is ignorant, let him be ignorant and he that is filthy, let him be more filthy. Let us now turn our speech to Asunetus, for I see he is heavy-hearted, and troubled in his mind. How do you, Asunetus? how do you feel your self? He thinks you are very sad.

Asun. I am the better for you, Sir, I thank God: I never knew what sin meant till this day. It hath pleased God now to give me some sight and feeling thereof. I am greatly distressed in my conscience to think what I have been. The remembrance of my former sins, do strike an horror into me. When I consider how ignorantly and profanely, and how far off from God I have lived all my life, it stings and gripes me to the heart. I do now see that which I never saw, and feel that which I never felt. I do plainly see, that if I had dyed in that state wherein I have lived all my life, I should certainly have been condemned, and should have perished for ever in my sin and ignorance.

Theol. I am very glad that God hath opened your eyes, and given you the sight and feeling of your misery; which indeed is the very first step to eternal life. It is a great favour and special mercy of God towards you, that he hath so touched your heart, you can never be thankful enough for it. It is more then if you had a million of Gold given you. It is the onely rare privilege of Gods Elect, to have

have the eyes of their soules opened, that they may see into heavenly and spiritual things. As for the world, it is just with God to leave them in their blindnesse.

Asun. I do feel the burthen of my sins: I am greatly grieved for them. I am weary of them. I am sorry that ever I sinned against God, or that I should be such a wretch, as to incur his displeasure, and provoke his Majesty against me. But I pray you, good Master *Theologus*, sith you are a spiritual Physitian, and I am sick of sin, that you would minister unto me out of Gods Word, some spiritual physick and comfort.

Theol. Truly, I must needs think, that the promises of mercy, and forgivenesse of sin made in the Gospel, do belong unto you, and that Jesus Christ is yours; that you are truely interessed in him, and have a proper right unto him. For he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. You do now feel your self to be a sinner; you are grieved for your sins; you are weary of them; therefore Jesus Christ is for you, all the benefits of his passion belong to you. Again he saith, The whole need not the Physitian, but they that are sick. But you do acknowledge your self to be sick of sin; therefore Jesus Christ will be your Physitian: he will swaddle you, he will lap you; he will bind up all your sores; he will heal all your wounds; he will anoint them with the oyl of his mercy, he will smile upon you, and shew you a joyful countenance; he will say unto you, Your sins are forgiven. Mat. 9 12.

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In him you shall have rest and peace to your soul. Through him you shall have ease and comfort. For he takes pity of all such as mourn for their sins as you do. He biddeth you, & all that are in your case, to come unto him, and he will help you. Come unto me (saith he) all you that are weary and heavy laden, and I will ease you. You are one of them that are bidden to come, for you are weary of your sins: you feel the burthen of them. Christ is altogether for such as you are. He regardeth not the world, that is, the prophane and unregenerate men. He bids not them come; he prayeth not for them. I pray not for the world (saith he.) They have no part nor interest in him. They have nothing to do with him, or with his merits and righteousness. He is onely for the penitent sinner, and such as mourn for their sins. He is a Pillow of Down to all aking heads, and aking consciences. Be of good comfort therefore, fear nothing: for assuredly Christ & all his righteousness is yours. He will cloathe you with it. He will never impute your sins unto you, or lay any of them to your charge; though they be so many, or so great; he will forget them, and forgive them; as he saith by the Prophet Esay, Though your sins were as crimson, they shall bee made as white as snow; though they were red like scarlet, they shall be as woll. And again, hee saith by the same Prophet, I have put away thy transgressions as thick as Clouds, and thy sins as a mist. By another Prophet he saith,

Mat. 11 28.

Joh. 17. 9.

Isa. 1. 18.

Isa. 44. 22.

Hee

Hee will lay aside our iniquities, and cast all our sins into the bottome of the Sea. **Again, he saith by the Prophet** Esay, I, even I, am he that put away thine iniquities for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins. **And yet more sweetly he speaks to us by the Prophet** Jeremy saying, Turn again unto mee, and I will not let my wrath fall upon you. For I am merciful, and will not alway keep mine anger. **And again by the Prophet** Hosea **he saith,** I will not execute the fiercenesse of my wrath, I will not return to destroy *Ephraim*; for I am GOD, and not man. **Be of good cheer therefore, comfort your self with these promises: you have cause to rejoyce, seeing GOD hath wrought in you a dislike & a grief for your sins, which is a certain token that your sins shall never hurt you; for sins past cannot hurt us, if sins present do not like us. You are grown to an hatred and dislike of your sins, you mourn under the burden of them, therefore you are blessed.** For blessed are they that mourn. **Why therefore should you be so heavy and sad? Remember what St** John **saith,** If any man sin we have an Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the reconciliation for our sins. **St.** Paul **saith, that** Jesus Christ is set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. **Again, the Holy Ghost saith,** He is perfectly able to save all those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us. **The Apostle saith,** He is made of God for us, wisdom, righteousnes, sanctification and redemption. **Mark that he saith,**

Mic. 7. 19. Isa. 43. 25. Jer. 3. 12. Hos. 11. 9. 1 Joh. 2. 1. Rom. 3. 25. Heb. 7. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 30.

All is for us, all is for his Church, for every member of his Church, and therefore for you: Christ is made of God righteousness, sanctification, and redemption for you: Christ is your Mediator, and your high Priest, and hath offered up the everlasting sacrifice, even for you, that hee might pay your ransome, and redéem you from all iniquity. Heb. 9. 12. By his own blood hath he entred once into the holy place, and obtained eternal redemption for you. Christ is not entred into the holy places which are made with hands, which are similitudes of the true Sanctuary, but is entred into the very Heaven, to appear now in the sight of God for you. Heb. 9. 24. The Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 5. 21. He hath made him to be sin for you, that knew no sin, that you might be made the righteousness of God in him, Gal. 3. 13. Christ was made a curse for you, that he might redeem you from the curse of the Law. Oh therefore how happy art thou that hast such a Mediator and high Priest! Rest therefore wholly upon him and upon that perfect, eternal, and propitiatory sacrifice which he hath once offered. Apply Christ. apply his merits, apply the promises to your self, and to your own conscience. So shall they do you good, and bring great comfort to your soul. For put case you had a most excellent and soveraign salve, which would cure any wound, if it were laid to; yet if you should lock it up in your chest, and never apply it to your wound, what good could it do you? Even so the righteousness and merits of Christ, are a spi-

spiritual Salve, which will cure any wound of the soul; but if we do not apply them to our souls by faith, they can do us no good. You must therefore apply Christ and all the promises of the gospel, to your self by faith; and stand fully perswaded that whatsoever he hath done upon the Cross, he hath done for you particularly. For what is justifying faith, but a full perswasion of Gods particular love to us in Christ? the general and confused knowledge of Christ and his Gospel, availes not to eternal life. Labour therefore to have the true use of all these great and precious promises, and stick fast to Christ: for through him only we have remission of sins, and eternal life. To him all the Prophets give witness (saith Saint Peter) that through his Name all that believe shall receive remission of their sins. Where the Apostle tells us, that if a great Jury of Prophets were pannelled to testifie of the way and means to eternal life, they would all, with one consent, bring in a verdict, that remission of sins and eternal life, are only in Christ. Let us hear the Fore-man speak, and one or two of the rest, for in the mouth of two or three witnesses, shall every word stand. The Prophet Esay saith, He was wounded for our transgressions, he was broken for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. This great Prophet we see plainly affirms, that Christ suffered for our sins, and by his suffering we are saved. The

Act. 10 43.

Isa. 53 5.

Prophet Jeremy testifies the same thing, saying, Behold the day is come, (saith the Lord) that I will raise to *David* a righteous branch, and a King shall raign and prosper, and shall execute Judgement and Justice in the earth. In his daies *Judah* shall be saved and *Israel* shall dwell safely: and this is the name whereby they shall call him, The Lord our righteousnesse. This Prophet jumps with the other: For he saith that Christ is the righteous branch, and that he is our righteousnesse: which is all one, as if he had said, Our sins are pardoned onely through him, & through him we are made righteous. Moreover, he affirms, that Judah and Israel, that is, the Church, shall be saved by him. The Prophet Zachary, that I may speak it with reverence, telleth the same tale, word for word. He avoucheth the same thing with the other two Prophets; for he saith, In that day a fountain shall bee opened to the house of *David*, and to the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, for sin and for uncleanesse. The meaning of the Prophet is, that in the dayes of Christs Kingdome, the fountain of Gods mercy in Christ, should be opened and let out to wash away the sins and uncleanesse of the Church. So then we see that these three great witnesses do all agree in this, that through Christ onely we are washed from our sins, & through him only we are made righteous. Seeing then that eternal life is onely in the Son, therefore he that hath the Son hath life. Bee of good courage therefore, O Alunetus; for no doubt

Jer. 23. 5.

Zac. 13. 1.

doubt you have the Son, and therefore eternal life. Fear not your sins, for they cannot hurt you: For as all the righteousnesse of Abraham, Isaak and Jacob, and all the most righteous men that ever lived on the face of the earth, if it were yours, could do you no good without Christ: so all the sin in the world can do you no hurt being in Christ; For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8 1. Pluck up a good heart therefore, bee no more heavy and sad; for if you be found in Christ, cloathed with his perfect righteousnesse, (being made yours through faith) what can the Devil say to you? what can the Law do? They may well hiss at you, but they cannot sting you; they may grin at you, but they cannot hurt you. For who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that justifies, who shall condemn? It is Christ which is dead, or rather which is risen again; who also sitteth at the right hand of GOD, and makes request for us. Rejoyce in the Lord therefore, again, I say, rejoyce: for greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world. Our Lord Jesus is stronger then all. None can pluck you out of his hands: he is a strong Mediator, he hath conquered all our spiritual enemies: he hath overcome Hell, Death, and Damnation: he hath led captivity captive: he hath spoiled principalities, and powers, & hath made an open shew of them, & triumphed over them on his Crosse. He hath most

Rom. 8. 33, 34.

phil. 4 4.

Col. 2. 15.

Hos. 13. 14. 1 Cor. 15. 55.

triumphantly said, O death, I will be thy death: O grave, I will be thy destruction O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victory? Seeing then you have such a Mediator and high Priest, as hath conquered the hellish army, and subdued all infernal power, what need you to doubt? what need you to fear any more? Moreover, you are to understand, is to be perswaded that Gods mercy is exceeding great towards penitent sinners, and all such as mourn for their transgressions: according as he saith, At what time soever a sinner doth repent him of his sins from the bottome of his heart, he will put them all out of his remembrance. The Prophet David doth most lively and fully describe unto us, the merciful nature of God, in the 103 Psalm, where he saith, The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger, and of great kindness: he will not always chide, neither keepeth his anger for ever: he hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heaven is above the earth, so great is his mercy towards those that fear him. As far as is the East from the West, so far he hath removed our sins from us. As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him. For he knows whereof we be made, he remembreth we are but dust. The History of the lost son, doth most notably set forth the wonderful mercy of God towards penitent sinners. There is shewed how the Lord doth embrace, tender, and make much of such

such poor sinners, as have broken and contrite hearts for their sins: for it is said, that when the father saw his repenting son a great way off, he had compassion on him, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him, and cloathed him with the best robe, put it on him, put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and caused the fat calf to bee killed for him. Even so the everlasting Father doth rejoyce at the conversion of any of his lost sons. Yea, there is joy in the presence of the Angels of God for one sinner that converteth. Moreover, the Lord most lively expresseth his merciful nature and disposition in this; That he is very loth we should perish, and willingly cast away our selves. Therefore often in the holy Scriptures he mourns for us, bewails our wretchedness & calls us many pitiful complaints and lamentations for us, saying, O that my people had hearkned unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways. And again, O that thou hadst hearkned unto my Commandments, then had thy prosperity been as the flood, and thy righteousness as the waters of the Sea. Again, hee mourningly complains by his Prophet Hosea, saying, O Ephraim, what shall I do to thee? O Judah, how shall I intreat thee? And in another place, What could I do more to my Vineyard that I have not done? Mark here how compassionately the Almighty God doth yern over us, and even as it were bleed upon our wounds. The Apostle also notes the rich mercy and marvellous love of GOD to

Luk. 15 20.

Isa. 81. 13.

Isa. 48 18.

Isa. 5. 4.

mankind in this, that he doth beseech us and pray us by the Ministers of the Gospel, that we would be reconciled unto him. The words are these; Now then are we Ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you through us, we pray you in Christs stead, that you be reconciled unto God. Is it not a strange thing that the omnipotent God should fall to entreating of us poor wretches? It is all one as if a King should entreat a Beggar, whom he may will and command. But the abundant mercy of GOD towards mankind doth most of all consist in this, that he hath given his only Son for us, when we were his enemies: as it is written, John 3. 14. God so loved the world, that hee hath given his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Again, God sets out his love towards us, seeing that while wee were yet sinners, Christ dyed for us, much more then being now justified by his blood, wee shall be saved from wrath through him. Rom. 5. 10. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Sonne; much more being reconciled, we shall bee saved by his life. In all this then we may clearly behold the infinite mercy of God towards us poor sinners. For is it not a great matter, that the Son of God should take our nature upon him, should be so abased as he was, should humble himself to death, even to the death of the Crosse? Phil. 2. 8. For as the shadow of the dyal went backten degrees, that Ezekias might receive

length

length of daies and much happiness, so Christ the Son of Righteousnesse, hath gone back many degrees, that we might have eternal life. His humiliation therefore is our exaltation, his sufferings our joy, his death our life. For we have no other remedy or refuge, but onely his merits and righteousnes. He is our City of refuge, whither we must fly, and where we must take sanctuary. Hee is the balm of Gilead, wherby our souls are cured. Hee is that pool of Bethesda, where every man may be cured of what disease soever he hath. Hee is the River of Jordan, where Naaman may wash away all his leprosie. Hee is that Pelican, who by pecking a hole in his own breast, doth restore his young to life again by his blood. Yet one thing we must note by the way, which hath been partly touched before, That all the mercies of God, and merits of Christ, are to be restrained onely to the Elect, only to the true members of the Church, as plainly appeareth in Psalm. 103, where the mercies of God, which are there largely described, are restrained onely to them that fear him, keep his covenant, and think upon his Commandments to do them. And touching Christ it is said, That hee is a Prince and a Saviour unto Israel, and that he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities. Again, it is written, that Christ being consecrated was made the Author of eternal salvation, to them that obey him. None do or can obey him but onely thee-

Jer. 46. 11. John. 5. 2. 2 King. 5. Psal. 130. 8. Heb. 5. 9.

therefore he is the Author of salvation onely to the Elect. And consequently, the prophane world, whatsoever they say, whatsoever they brag and boast, have no true title, or interest in him. This thing was figured in the Law, in this, that the Exod. 25. 20. Mercy-seat, which was a type of Gods mercy in Christ; and the Ark which was a figure of the Church, were by the expresse Commandment of God, fitted each to other, both in length and breadth. For as the Ark was two Cubits and a half long, and a cubit and a half broad; just so was the Mercy-seat. Noting thereby, that the mercy of God in Christ should onely be fitted to his Church, and belong onely to the Church, so as not one without the Church should be saved. For he that hath not the Church for his Mother, cannot have God for his Father. Lastly, we are to observe, that as God is infinite in mercy, and of great compassion toward penitent sinners; so also is he most constant in the course of his mercies towards his children. And therefore one of the Psalms carries this note, His mercy endureth for ever, his mercy endureth for ever, his mercy endureth for ever. Noting thereby both the constancy and eternity of Gods mercy. To the same purpose it is thus written, It is the Lords mercy that we are not consumed, it is because his compassions fail not. Let us know therefore, that God, as touching his mercy to his children, is of a most constant and unchangeable nature. As he saith I am the Lord, I change

change not. For if God were of a changeable nature, as we are, and subject to passions, then were we in a most miserable case, then must he needs smite us down, and take vengeance of us every day, and every hour in the day, because we provoke him every day, and every hour in the day. But the God of Heaven is not as a man, that he should be subject to passions and affections; he is of a most constant and immutable nature. For though we provoke him every day with new sins, yet he is so far off from taking revenge, that the next day he rewardeth us with new mercies, and breaketh through all our unkindness to shew kindnesse to us; and through all our naughtinesse to do us good. All our infirmities cannot make him break off with us, or cease to love us. He is content to take us with all faults, and to love us dearly, though we have great faults. He regardeth not our infirmities, though we be oftentimes wayward and wilful, yet for all that he loveth us nevertheless. Even as a loving Mother, though her young sucking cry all the night, and be exceeding tresse and way-ward, so as she cannot rest an hour in the night; yea, though she endure much loathsomenesse & trouble with it, yet in the morning when she riseth, she loveth it never the lesse, but dandleth it, playeth with it, smileth and laugheth upon it. So the God of all mercies, whose love towards us far passeth the love of mother, though we grieve him with our infirmities continually, yet loveth us never-

nevertheleſſe, and is content to put up all, to forget and forgive all; for he is a moſt conſtant lover. Where her once ſets and ſettles his love, he loveth moſt conſtantly; nothing can alter him, nothing can remove him. Even as a Father, when his little child catcheth a fall, breaketh his ſhins, and hurteth his face, is ſo far from being offended or diſpleaſed with him therefore, that he doth pity him, & bemoan him, ſeeking remedies for his hurt: So our merciful Father is ſo far off from being angry and diſpleaſed with us for ſome ſlips and falls, that he doth the more pity us, and lament our caſe. Even as a loving and wiſe husband, although his wife have many infirmities, yet being aſſured ſhe loves him dearly, and that her heart is with him, he is well content to wink at all her faults, and hide them, to bear with them; yea, and to make nothing of them, loving her no whit the leſſe for them. So our dear Husband and Spouſe, Chriſt Jeſus, becauſe he knoweth we love him, and that he hath our hearts, is content to bear with all our infirmities, and to make light of them. For this cauſe is it, that he ſaith to his Spouſe in the Canticles, though ſhe was black and full of infirmities, Behold thou art all fair, my Love: Behold, thou art fair: thou art all fair, my Love, there is no ſpot in thee, Cant. 4. 1, 7. Mark, that hee calleth the Church, fair, all fair, and without ſpot; not becauſe ſhe was ſo in her ſelf, but becauſe ſhe was made ſo in him: and aſſuredly the

for

eternal God, beholding her in his Son, doth so esteem and account of her. For as he that beholdeth any thing through a red glass, doth take it to be red, as is the colour of the Glass, so God the Father beholding us in his Son, doth take us to be of the same nature and quality that he is, that is perfectly righteous. For this cause it is, that he loveth us, and setteth his heart upon us, and will not be removed from us. For his love to his children is alwaies one and the same although we have not alwaies the like sight and feeling of it: as the Moon is alwaies the same in substance and quantity though sometimes it seemeth unto us to be wasted into a very small scantling. Let us know then, to our great comfort, that the love of God toward us, in his dear Son, is constant, and alwaies alike: and that hee will not discountenance us, or shake us off for some infirmities, no nor yet for many infirmities: For the merciful God doth accept of his children, because their general care is good, and the universal tenour of their life tendeth unto righteousness, howsoever they may greatly fail in many particular actions. Two or three fits of an ague doth not prove a diseased body: nor two or three good daies a sound body: even so some few infirmities do not argue a wicked man: nor two or three good actions a good man: but we must have an eye to the certain & setled course of a mans life: even as men are truely said to walk in a way, when they go in it, although sometimes they

trip and stumble: So Gods Children do walk in the way of righteousnesse, although they sometimes stumble and step out of it, or sometimes be violently hailed out of it by theeves. For Satan and the violence of our lusts, do often hail us out of the way; but we must get into it again as soon as we are escaped. Now then to conclude and draw to an end: With God is so infinitely merciful, and constant in his mercy: sith such great and precious promises are made to us in Christ: sith the Lord doth not regard our infirmities when our hearts are with him: therefore, O Asunetus, be of good cheer, let nothing trouble you; fear not the assaults of the Devil, regard not his temptations, for assuredly your sins are forgiven. Christ is yours; Heaven is yours; and all the promises of life and salvation belong unto you. So as you need not doubt, you cannot miscarry: your name is written in the Book of Life.

Asun. I am greatly comforted and cheered up with your words. Your preaching of the Gospel, and laying open of Gods abundant mercy in Christ, and of the Promises, doe exceedingly revive me, and even as it were, put new life into me: they are as Sack and Sugar, unto my soul, and sweeter then the honey and the honey-comb: They are as Physick to my sick soul, and as ointment to my spiritual wounds. I do now begin to see what misery is in man, and what mercy is in God. And I know by woeful experience, that where misery is not felt, there mercy is not regarded:

but

but now it hath pleased God to give me some feeling of mine own wretchednesse and misery, and yet with good comfort in his mercy. For I thank God for it, I begin now to grow to some perswasion, that the promises do belong unto mee, my sins are forgiven, and that I am one of them that shall be saved.

Theol. **I do greatly rejoyce, that God hath, according to his rich mercy, wrought this good worke in you. I do from the bottom of my heart, give him the praise and glory of it. Happy are you that ever you were borne, in whom the Lord hath wrought so gracious a worke. It is his high favour and special mercy towards you: for it is the onely priviledge and prerogative royal of Gods Children, truely to repent and beleeve: I beseech God therefore to encrease your faith, and to fill you full of joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.**

Anti. The Sun draws low: *Assumetus*, it is time for you and mee to be going.

Phil. Indeed the night will approach by and by, and therefore we must of necessity break off.

Theol. **With it is so, we will here surcease and go no further.**

Asun Sir, I will now take my leave of you: I can never be thankful enough for all the good instructions and comforts which I have heard from you this day: I hope I shall remember some of them whilst I live. I do therefore praise God for you, and for your counsel

counsel, and for this day, which I hope shall bee the first day of my repentance, and true conversion unto God.

Theol. **The Lord for his infinite mercies sake grant it, And I most humbly beseech the Almighty God, to establish you with his free Spirit, that you may proceed and go forward in a Christian course unto the end.**

Phil. I pray you, good Master *Theologus*, pardon my boldness, for you see I have been very bold to propound many questions unto you, wherein you have fully satisfied me, to the great joy and comfort of my soul, I do therefore praise God for you, and I hope I shall never forget some things you have uttered. But I will now commend you to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build us further.

Theol. **Farewel good** Philagathus. **The Lord bless you and keep you in all your waies: and the God of heaven preserve us all, and continue us in his fear unto the end.**

5 MA 56

All Glory bee given to God.

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FINIS.

A Morning Prayer, to bee used in private FAMILIES.

O Lord our God, and heavenly Father, we thy unworthy children do here come into thy most holy and heavenly presence, to give thee praise and glory, for all thy great mercies and manifold blessings towards us, especially for that thou hast preserved us this night past, from all the dangers & fears thereof; hast given us quiet rest to our bodies, and brought us now safely to the begining of this day, & dost now afresh renew all thy mercies upon us, as the Eagle reneweth her bill; giving us all things abundantly to enjoy; as food raiment, health, peace, liberty, & freedom from many miseries, diseases, casualties, & calamities which we are subject to in this life every minute of an hour: and not only so, but also for vouchsafing unto us many good things, not only for necessity but even for delight also. But above all (dear Father) we praise thy name for the blessings of a better life; especially for thy most holy Word and Sacraments, and all the good we enjoy thereby; for the continuance of the Gospel amongst us, for the death of thy Son, & all that happiness which we have thereby; also because thou hast chosen us to life before we were, and that of thy meer goodness and undeserved favour towards us; and hast called us in thine appointed time, justified us by thy grace, and sanctified us by thy Spirit, and adopted us to be thine own children, and Heires apparent to the great Crown. O Lord open our eies every day more & more, to see and consider of thy great and marvellous love to us in all these things; that by the due consideration therof, our hearts may be drawn yet neerer unto thee, even more to love thee, fear thee, and obey thee; that as thou art enlarged towards us in mercy, so we may be enlarged towards thee in thanksgiving; and as thou dost abound towards us in goodness, so we may abound towards thee in obedience and love. And sith (dear Father) thou art never weary of doing us good, notwithstanding all our unworthiness,

nes and naughtines, therefore let the consideration of thy great mercy and fatherly kindnes towards us, even as it were force our hearts, and compell us to come into thy most glorious presence, with new songs of thanksgiving in our mouths. We pray thee (O most mercifull God) to forgive all our unthankfulnes, unkindnes, prophanenes, and great abusing of all thy mercies and specially our abuse and contempt of thy Gospel, together with all other the sins of our life, which we cowards are innumerable, and more then can be reckoned up, both in omission of good things, & commission of evil. We most humbly entreat thee to let them all over to the reckoning which thy Son hath made up for them upon his Crosse, and never to lay any of them to our charge, but freely forget all, and forgive all. Nail down all our sins, & iniquities to the Crosse of Christ, bury them in his death, bathe them in his blood, hide them in his wounds, let them never rise up in judgement against us. Set us free of the miseries that are upon us for sin, and keep back the judgements to come, both of soul, body, goods, & good name. Be reconciled to us in thy dear Son concerning all matters past, not once remembring or repeating to us our old and abominable iniquities, but accept us as righteous in him, imputing his righteousnes unto us, and our sins unto him. Let his righteousnes satisfy thy Justice for all our unrighteousnes, his obedience for our disobedience, his perfection for our imperfection. Moreover, we humbly beseech thy good majesty to give us the true sight & feeling of our manifold sins, that we may not be blinded in the through delight, or hardned in them through customne, as the reprobates are; but that we may be even weary of the and much grieved for them, labouring and striving by all possible means to get out of them. Good Father touch our hearts with true repentance for all sin. Let not us take any delight or pleasure in any sin; but how sorver we fall through frailty (as we fall often) let us never fall finally, let us never lye down in sin nor continue in sin: but let us get upon our feet again, & turn to thee with all our hearts, and seek thee whilst thou mayst be found, and whilst thou dost offer grace and mercy unto us. O Lord increase in us that true & lively faith, whereby we may lay sure hold on thy Son

Christ

Spirit and rest upon his merits altogether. Give us faith assuredly to believe all thy great and precious promises made in the Gospel, and strengthen us from above to walk and abound in all the true and sound fruits of faith. Let us walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Let us feel the power of thy sons death killing sin in our mortal bodies, and the power of his resurrection, raising us up to newness of life. Let us grow daily in the sanctification of thy Spirit, and the mortification of the flesh. Let us live holily, justly, and soberly in this present evil world, shewing forth the vertues of thee, in all our particular actions, that we may adorn our most holy profession, and shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and froward generation amongst whom we live, being faithful to all by our lives and conversation, and offensive to none. To this end we pray thee fill us with thy Spirit, and all spiritual graces, as love, wisdome, patience, contentment, meekness, humility, temperance chastity, kindness, and stability, and stir us up to use prayer and watchfulness, reading and meditation in thy Law, and all other good means, whereby we may grow and abound in all heavenly vertues. Bless us in the use of the means from day to day, make us such as thou wouldst have us to be, and such as we desire to bee: work in us both will and deed, purpose and power: For thou, O Lord, art all in all, thou wilt have mercy upon whom thou wilt have mercy, and whom thou wilt thou hardnest. Have mercy upon us therefore, (dear Father) and never leave us to our selves, nor to our own wills, lusts and desires, but assist us with thy good Spirit, that we may continue to the end in a righteous course; that so at length we may be received into glory, and be partakers of that immortal Crown which thou hast laid up for all that love thee, and truly call upon thee.

Further, we intreat thee, O heavenly Father, to give us all things necessary for this life; as food, raiment, health, peace, liberty, and such freedom from those manifold miseries which we lye open unto every day, as thou seest meet. Bless unto us all the means which thou hast put into our hands for the sustenance of this frail life. Bless our flock and store, corn and cattel, trades and occupations, and all works of our hands: for

for thy blessing only makes rich, and it bringeth no sorrows with it. Give us therefore such a competency & sufficiency of these outward blessings, as thou in thy heavenly wisdome seest most needful for us. Moreover we humbly beseech thee (most loving Father) in great mercy look down from heaven upon thy whole church and every member of it. Be favourable unto Sion, & build up the wals of Jerusalem. Behold with the eye of pity, the great ruines & desolations of thy Church. Heal up the wounds, & make up the breaches thereof in all Nations. Regard it as thine own flock, tender it as thine own family, rest it as thine own vineyard, and love it as thine own Spouse. Think thoughts of peace to it, and alwaies look upon it in deep compassion. Bless it with thy grace, guide it with thy Spirit, and defend it still by thy mighty power: Scatter the devises, confound the counsels, & overthrow the forces of all that fight against it. Specially we entreat thee dear Father, to set thy self against that Antichrist of Rome, that man of perdition, which setteth himself against thee, and against all thy people. In thine appointed time we pray thee give him a deadly downfal: Beat down all his power and authority daily more & more; give free passage to thy Gospel in all Kingdoms that Babylon may fall and never rise up again. The more the favourites and adherents of Rome labour to uphold their Idolatrous kingdom, the more let it fall down; even as Dagon before the presence of thine Ark. Poure down the Vials of the fulness of thy wrath upon the Kingdoms of the Beast; and let their Riches, wealth, credit, & authority, pay up every day more and more; as the River Euphrates. Let it pitty thee, O Father, to see thine own Spouse sit as a deformed and forlorn woman here below; weeping & mourning with her hair about her neck; having lost all her beauty and comliness. Chear her up (dear Father) glad her with the joy of thy countenance, and so deck her & trim her up, that thou mayest delight in her as a Bridegroom in his Bride. Specially we intreat thee have mercy upon thy Church in this Land: intend good unto us & not evill. Give us not over into the hands of our cruel enemies, as our sins have deserved. Scatter we pray thee (O Lord) the devises, and break the plots of all such as have plotted the overthrow & utter subversion

of

of this Church & Commonwealth. Bless this Church more and more with the continuance of true Religion amongst us, for thy great Names sake, and infinite mercies sake; deal graciously and favourably with us and our posterity. Turn from us that vengeance which is due unto us for our sins. For thou seest how iniquity prevaileth, and the wicked go away with the goal. Authority overyeareth every where, & Poverty seemeth to get a head again. Now therefore (dear Father) we most humbly beseech thee to take order speedily for the remedying and repressing of these manifold disorders and grievous enormities that are amongst us. Be entreated of thy poor children to be good to this English Nation. Hear the cries of thine Elect, hear the mourning of them that mourn in Sion. Let the cries of thy children cry down all the cries of the sins of the Land, and be reconciled unto us in the multitude of thy compassions, that so thou mayst still continue a most merciful Protector of this thine English Vineyard. We pray thee (good Father) shew special mercy to our Governours: Bless and keep them in all their wayes; bless their Government unto us. Let thine Angels encamp about them, and let thy holy hand be always over them: keep them from treasons, and deliver them from the treacheries of their enemies: give them to see what belongs to their Peace, and give them a heart earnestly bent to set upon the practise of the same: bless all our Counsellours, and give such success unto all their counsels and policies in matters of State, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness & honesty. Bless all the Nobility, work in them a care to glorifie thy Name in their places: make them faithful to thee, and faithful to the Land. Direct with thy good Spirit all such as bear the Sword of Justice, that they may draw it out to punish the wicked, and to defend the godly; and that they may with all good care and conscience discharge the duties of their places. Increase the number of faithful and zealous Ministers in this Church. Send thy Gospel to those places where it is not, and bless it where it is. Remember them in thy mercy (O Lord) that are under any crosse or affliction whatsoever: be comfortable unto them, heal up their wounds, bind up their sores, put all their tears into thy bottle, and make their bed in all their sorrows

and put such a good end to all their troubles, that they may redound to thy glory, and the furtherance of their own salvation. In the mean time give them patience and constancy, to bear whatsoever it shall please thy merciful hand to lay upon them. Lastly (in a word) we pray thee bless the Magistracy, Ministry, & Commonalty. Bless all thy people, do good to all that are true and upright in their hearts. And so (dear Father) we do commit and commend our selves, our souls and bodies into thy hands, for this day and the rest of our life, praying thee to take care and charge of us. Keep us from all evil, watch over us for our good, let thine Angels encamp about us, let thy holy hand be over us, and keep us in all our waies, that we may live to thy praise, and glory here on earth, keeping faith and a good conscience in all our actions; that after this life we may be crowned of thee for ever in thy Kingdom. Grant these things (good Father) to us here present, and to all thine absent, praying thee in special favour to remember all our friends and kinsfolks in the flesh, all our good Neighbours and well-willers, and all those for whom we are bound to pray, by nature, by desert, or any duty whatsoever, for Jesus Christs sake our alone Mediator: To whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be given all praise and glory, both now and for evermore. Amen.

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An Evening Prayer, to bee used in private FAMILIES.

O Eternall God, and most loving & dear Father, we thy unworthy children do here fall down at the foot of thy great Majesty, acknowledging from our hearts, that we are altogether unworthy to come nere thee, or to look towards thee, because thou art a God of infinite glory, & we are most vile and abominable sinners, such as were conceived and born in sin and corruption, & such as have inherited our Fathers corruptions, and also have actually transgressed all thy holy Statutes and Lawes, both in thoughts, words & deeds, before we knew thee & since, secretly and openly, with our selves and with others: our particular sins are more then can be numbred; for who knoweth how often he offendeth? But this we must needs confess against our selves, that our hearts are full of pride, covetousnes, & the love of this world; full of wrath anger, and impatience; full of lying, dissembling & deceiving; full of vanity, harmnes & profanenes; full of infidelity, distrust and selflove; full of lust, uncleannes, and all abominable desires: yea, our hearts are the very links of sin, & dunghills of all filthinesse. And besides all this we do omit the good things we should do; for there are in us great wants of faith, of love, of zeal, of patience, of contentment, & of every good grace; so as thou hast just cause to proceed to sentence of judgement against us as most damnable transgressors of all thy holy Commandments; yea such as are sunk in our rebellions, & have many times and often committed high treason against thy Majesty; and therefore thou mayest justly cast us all down into hel-fire, there to be tormented with Satan and his angels for ever. And we have nothing to except against thy Majesty for so doing, sith therein thou shouldest deal with us but according to equity, and our deserts. Wherefore (dear Father) we do appeal from thy justice to thy mercy, most humbly intreating thee to have mercy upon us, and freely to forgive us all our sins past whatsoever; both new and old, secret & open,

known and unknown; and that for Jesus Christs sake our alone Mediator. And we pray thee touch our hearts with true grief & unfeigned repentance for them, that they may be a continual sorrow and heart-smart unto us; so as nothing may grieve us more than this, that we have offended thee, being our special friend & Father: Give us therefore (dear Father) every day more & more light and feeling of our sins, with true humiliation under the same. Give us also that true and lively Faith, whereby we may lay sure hold on thy Son Christ and all his merits, applying the same to our own souls; so as we may stand fully perswaded, that whatsoever he hath done upon the Cross, he hath done for us particularly, as well as for others. Give us faith (good Father) constantly to believe all the sweet promises of the Gospel, touching remission of sin, & eternal life, made in thy Son Christ O Lord increase our faith, that we may altogether rest upon thy promises, which are Yea & Amen. Yea, that we may settle our selves & all that we have wholly upon them; both our souls, bodies, goods, names, wives, children, & our whole estate: knowing that all things depend upon thy promises, power & providence, and that thy Word doth support & bear up the whole order of Nature. Moreover, we entreat thee (O Lord) to strengthen us (so above, to walk in every good way; & to bring forth the fruits of true faith in all our particular actions, studying to please thee in all things, & to be fruitful in good works; that we may shew forth unto all men by our good conversation whose children we are: and that we may adorn and beautify our most holy profession, by walking in a Christian course, & in all the sound fruits & practise of godliness and true Religion. To this end we pray thee sanctify our hearts by thy Spirit yet more & more; sanctify our souls & bodies and all our corrupt natural faculties, as reason, understanding, will & affections, so as they may be fitted for thy worthy and service; taking a delight & pleasure therein. Stir us up to all prayer, watchfulness, reading & meditation in thy Laws, and all other good means whereby we may profit in grace and goodness from day to day. Bless us in the use of the means, that we may daily die to sin, and live to righteousness: draw us yet nearer unto thee, help us against our manifold wants. Amend our great imperfections; renew us inwardly more and more; repair the ruines of our hearts; Aide us against the

remnants

remnants of sin. Enlarge our hearts to run the way of thy Commandments. direct all our steps in thy Word, let none iniquity have dominion over us. Assist us against our special infirmities & master-sins, that we may get the victory over them all, to thy glory, and the great peace & comfort of our own consciences. Strengthen us (good Father) by thy grace & holy Spirit, against the common corruptions of the world; as pride, whoredom, covetousness, contempt of the Gospel; swearing, lying, dissembling, & deceiving. O dear Father, let us not be overcome of these filthy vices; nor any other sinful pleasures and fond delights, wherewith thousands are carried headlong to destruction. Arm our souls against all the temptations of this world, the flesh and the Devil, that we may overcome them all through thy help, & keep on the right way to life, that we may live in thy fear, and die in thy favour; that our last daies may be our best daies; and that we may end in great peace of conscience.

Furthermore (dear Father) we intreat thee not only for our selves, but for all our good Brethren, thy dear children, scattered over the face of the whole earth, most humbly beseeching thee to bless them all; to chear them up, and glad them with the joy of thy countenance, both now and alwaies. Guide them all in thy fear and keep them from evil, that they may praise thy Name. In these dangerous daies, and declining times, we pray thee (O Lord) raise up nursing Fathers & nursing Mothers unto thy Church. Raise up also faithful Pastors, that thy Cause may be carried forward, truth may prevail, Religion may prosper; thy Name only may be set up in the earth; thy Sons Kingdom advanced; and thy will accomplished. Set thy self against all adversary power, especially that of Rome; Antichrist, Idolatry & Atheism; curse and cross all their councils, frustrate their devices scatter their Forces overthrow their Armies. When they are most wise, let them be most foolish; when they are most strong, let them be most weak. Let them know that there is no wisdom nor counsel, power nor policy against thee the Lord of Hosts. Let them know that Israel hath a God, and that thou which art called Jehovah, art the only Ruler over all the world. Arise therefore (O most mighty God) and maintain thine own cause against all thine enemies, smite through all their loins, & bow down their backs; yea, let them all be confounded and turned backward that bear ill will unto Sion. Let the patient

abiding of the Righteous be ioy, and let the wicked be disappointed of their hope. But of all favour, we intreat thee (O Lord) to shew special mercy to thy Church in this Land wherein we live. Continue thy Gospel among us yet with greater success, purge thy house daily more & more, take away all things that offend. Let this Nation still be a place where thy Name may be called upon, & an harbour for thy Saints. Shew mercy to our posterity (dear Father) and have care of them, that thy Gospel may be left unto them as a most holy inheritance. Defend us against forreign invasion, keep our Idolatry & Popery from amongst us. Turn from us those Plagues which our sins cry for. For the sins of this Land are exceeding great, horrible and outragious; and give thee just cause to make us spectacles of thy vengeance to all Nations; that by how much the more thou hast lifted us up in great mercy and long peace; by so much the more thou shouldst press us down in great wrath & long War. Therefore (dear Father) we most humbly intreat thee, for thy great Names sake, & for thy infinite mercies sake that thou wouldest be reconciled to this Land, and discharge it of all the horrible sins thereof. Drown them (O Lord) in thy infinite mercy, through Christ, as it were in a bottomless Gulph; that they may never rise up in judgement against us. For although our sins be exceeding many & fearful, yet thy mercy is far greater. For thou art infinite in mercy, but we cannot be infinite in sining. Give us not over into the hands of the Idolaters, lest they should blaspheme thy Name, and say, Where is their God in whom they trusted? But rather, dear Father, take us into thine own hands, & correct us according to thy wisdom, for with thee is mercy and deep compassion. Moreover, we most heartily beseech thy good Maiesty to bless all that are in authority over us; counsel them from above, let them take advice of thee in all things, that they may both consult & resolve of such courses as may be most for thy glory, the good of the Church, and peace of this our Commonwealth. Bless the Nobility, and all the Magistrates of the Land, giving them all grace to execute Judgement & Justice, & to maintain truth and equity. Bless all the faithful Ministers of the Gospel, increase the number of them, increase thy gifes in them, & so bless all their labours in their several places & Congregations, that they all may be instruments of thy hand to enlarge

thy

thy Sons Kingdom, & to win many unto thee. Comfort the comfortless with all needful comforts. Forget none of thine that are in trouble, but as their afflictions are, so let the joys and comforts of thy Spirit be unto them, and so sanctify unto all thine their afflictions & troubles, that they may tend to thy glory, & their own good. Give us thankful hearts for all thy mercies both spiritual & corporal, for thou art very merciful unto us in the things of this life, and infinitely more merciful in the things of a better life. Let us deeply ponder and weigh all thy particular favours towards us, that by the due consideration thereof, our hearts may be gained yet nearer unto thee, and that therefore we may both love and obey thee, because thou art so kind & loving unto us; that even thy love towards us may draw our loves towards thee, and that because mercy is with thee, thou mayest be feared. Grant these things (good Father) and all other needfull Graces for our souls or bodies, or any of thine throughout the whole world, for Jesus Christs sake: In whose Name we further call upon thee, as he hath taught us in his Gospel, saying:

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

A Prayer to be used at any time, by one alone privately.

O *Lord my God and Heavenly Father, I thy most unworthy child do here in thy sight freely confesse that I am a most sinful creature; and damnable transgressour of all thy holy Laws and Commandments: that as I was born and bred in sin, and stained in the womb, so have I continually brought forth the corrupt and ugly fruits of that infection and contagion, wherein I was first conceived, both in thoughts, words and works: If I should go about to reckon up my particular offences, I know not where to begin, or where to make an end. For they are more then the hairs of my head; yea, far more then I can possibly feel or know. For who knoweth the heighth and depth of his corruption? who knoweth how oft he offendeth? Thou onely, O Lord, knowest my sins, who knowest my heart; nothing is hid from thee: thou knowest what I have been, and what I am, yea, my conscience doth accuse mee of many and grievous evils, and I do daily feel by woeful experience how frail I am, how prone to evil, and how untoward unto all goodnesse. My mind is full of vanity, my heart full of profaneneſſe, mine affections full of deadnesse dulnesse, drowsinesse in matters of thy worship and service: Yea, my whole soul is full of spiritual blindnesse, hardnesse, unprofitableneſſe, coldnesse and security. And in very deed, I am altogether a lump of sin, and a masse of all misery, and therefore I have forfeited thy favour, incurred thy high displeasure, and have given thee just cause to frown upon me, to give me over, and leave me to*

mine

mine own corrupt will and affections. But (O my dear Father) I have learned from thy mouth, that thou art a God full of mercy, slow to wrath, of great compassion and kindnesse towards all such as groan under the burthen of their sins. Therefore extend thy great mercie towards mee poor sinner, and give mee a generall pardon for all mine offences whatsoever: seal it in the blood of thy Son, and seal it to my conscience by thy Spirit, assuring mee more and more of thy love and favour towards me, and that thou art a reconciled Father unto me. Grant that I may all time to come love thee much, because much is given, and of very love fear thee, and obey thee. O Lord, increase my faith, that I may stedfastly believe all the promises of the Gospel made in thy Son Christ, and rest upon them altogether. Enable mee to bring forth the sound fruits of faith and repentance in all my particular actions. Fill my soul full of joy and peace in believing. Fill me full of inward comfort, and spiritual strength against all temptations: give mee yet a greater feeling of thy love, and manifold mercies toward mee; work in my soul a love of thy Majesty, a zeal of thy Glory, and hatred of all evil, and a desire of all good things. Give mee victory over those sins, which thou knowest are strongest in mee. Let me once at last make a conquest of the world and the flesh. Mortifie in mee whatsoever is carnal: sanctifie mee throughout by thy Spirit: knit my heart to thee for ever, that I may fear thy Name: renew in mee the Image of thy Son Christ, daily more and more. Give mee a delight in the reading and meditating of thy Word. Let mee rejoyce in the publick Ministry thereof. Let mee love and reverence all the faithful Ministers of thy Gospel. Sanctifie their doctrines to my conscience, seal them in my soul, write them in my heart, give me a soft and melting heart, that I may tremble at thy words, and be alwaies much affected with godly Sermons. Let not my sins hold back thy mercies from mee, nor mine unworthinesse

stop

stop the passage of thy grace. Open mine eyes to see the great wonders of thy law. Reveal thy secrets unto mee; be open-hearted toward me thy unworthy servant. Hide nothing from me, that may make for thy glory, and the good of my soul. Bless all means unto me which thou usest for my good. Bless all holy instructions unto my soul. Bless me at all times, both in hearing and reading of thy Word. Give me the right use of all thy mercies and corrections, that I may be the better for them. Let me abound in love to thy children. Let my heart be very nearly knit unto them, that where thou lovest most, there I may love most also. Let mee watch and pray that I enter not into temptation; give mee patience and contentment in all things. Let me love thee more and more, and the world lesse and lesse. So draw my mind upward, that I may despise all transitory things. Let mee be so wrapt and ravished with the sight and feeling of heavenly things, that I may make a base reckoning of all earthly things. Let me use this world, as though I used it not. Let mee use it but for necessity, as meat and drink. Let mee not be carryed away with the vain pleasures and fond delights thereof. Good Father work the good work in mee, and never leave me nor forsake me, till thou hast brought me to true happinesse. Oh dear Father, make mee faithful in my calling, that I may serve thee in it, and bee alwaies careful to do what good I may in any thing. Bless mee in my outward estate. Bless my soul, body, goods, and name. Bless all that belong unto me. Blesse my goings out and comings in. Let thy countenance be lifted up upon me, now and alwaies; chear me up with the joys and comforts of thy spirit, make me thankful for all thy mercies. For I must needs confesse that thou art very kind to mee in all things. For in thee I live, move and have my being; of thee I have my welfare and good being; thou art a daily friend, and special good benefactor unto me. I live at thy cost and charges, I hold all of thee in chief, and I find that

thou

thou art never weary of doing me good, thy goodnesse towards mee is unchangeable. Oh, I can never be thankful enough unto thee for all thy mercies both spiritual and corporal. But in such measure as I am able, I praise thy Name for all, beseeching thee to accept of my thanksgiving in thy Son Christ; and to give me a profitable use of all thy favours, that thereby my heart may bee fully drawn unto thee. Give mee, O Father, to bee of such a good nature and disposition, that I may be won by gentlenesse, and fair means, as much as if thou gavest mee many lashes. Pardon all mine unthankfulnesse, unkindnesse, and great abusing of thy mercies, and give me grace to use them more to thy glory in all time to come. Strengthen mee, dear Father, thus to continue praising and glorifying thy Name here upon earth, that after this life I may be Crowned of thee for ever in thy Kingdome. Grant these Petitions, most merciful God, not only to me, but to all thy dear children throughout the whole world, for Jesus Christs sake: in whose name I do further call upon thee, saying as he hath taught mee, Our Father which art in Heaven, *&c.*

FINIS.

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